

UB INTERNATIONAL

FALL 2025  VOL. XXXIV, NO.2

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UB International

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FROM KYIV TO BUFFALO AND BACK

By Olha O. Kravchenko

In December 2024, I happened to attend a presentation about the American Councils for International Education BridgeUSA Ukraine Program for Resilience and Reconstruction (UPRR) and thought, “Why not try?” Almost a year later, out of more than 300 applicants from all over Ukraine, I was one of five scholars selected for the incredible chance to spend a month

and believe in you. It felt especially nice to hear people call me lucky—because working with Professor Haiqing Lin, a brilliant scientist and an amazing person, was a real honor.

The program was so intense that some days felt like a whole week. In just four weeks, I managed to work in a lab in the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering, have 27 meetings with researchers, join university classes and give



Olha Kravchenko (2nd from left) with Haiqing Lin (center) and his research team

at a U.S. university in fall 2025.

The BridgeUSA UPRR builds links between Ukrainian and U.S. scholars for long-term collaboration on joint research, shared pedagogy, course development, and publications.

By fostering lasting and productive partnerships between Ukrainian universities and U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs), this program educates and trains professionals critical to Ukraine’s capacity to recover and rebuild.

Program fellows are matched with faculty mentors at a U.S. institution with whom they develop collaborative programs that address their research and educational specialties.

I’m truly happy that it turned out to be the University at Buffalo—a wonderful place with a warm atmosphere and people who know how to support you, inspire you,

lectures for native speakers, organize a seminar on the impact of war on Ukraine’s agro- and hydro-ecosystems, complete lab safety training and get certified, and attend my mentor’s American Chemical Society award ceremony.

I also want to express my sincere gratitude to the scientists and researchers who supported me throughout this month: Lisa (Vahapoğlu) Lenker, Diana Aga, Johannes Nitsche, Yinyin Ye, Aurora Munguía-López. Your openness, valuable advice, and willingness to share your experience truly meant a lot to me.

I’m incredibly grateful to BridgeUSA UPRR and especially to Yarema Bachynsky—what you do for Ukrainian scientists truly matters. Thank you to Diana Shalashna and Ksenia Ivanenko for all the support.

Huge thanks to the UB administration and Office of International Education, es-

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FROM THE VICE PROVOST

In our fall issue we are pleased to share updates on efforts to support and expand area studies initiatives at UB, particularly in partnership with the College of Arts and Sciences.

The prestigious core university grant from the Academy of Korean Studies (AKS) to the Asia Research Institute described in the adjoining article (p. 3) is a major step forward in consolidating UB's position as regional hub for Korean Studies and builds on the three-year seed grant awarded by AKS in 2022.

The Office of International Education (OIE) is also pleased to work with the College in expanding Middle East Studies through MESI: Middle East Studies Initiative (p. 8) that strengthens curricular resources on the Middle East and Islam in various departments and sponsors a variety of programming that brings visiting experts to UB for talks, workshops and performances. I congratulate Professor



Hani Khafipour of the Department of History for leading this effort as MESI chair along with the multidisciplinary steering committee.

A third initiative in the College is to strengthen Polish Studies, an historically significant program that draws on the rich cultural heritage of Western New York's Polonia.

With funding support from OIE, the program directors, Professors Ewa and Krzysztof Ziarek of the Department of Comparative Literature will launch a three-year lecture series in Polish Studies in spring 2026 featuring a faculty member who has been part of the Jagiellonian University's visiting scholar program.

Olga Szmidt, assistant professor in the Faculty of Polish Studies and chair of Contemporary Criticism at the Jagiellonian, previously visited UB in late 2023 to work with Ewa Ziarek on a project addressing the cultural impact of the global financial crisis of 2008. Szmidt will return in early March for the inaugural talk in the series.

My office welcomes the opportunity to support these important initiatives to strengthen area studies at UB and afford our students expanded options for global learning. ♦

FROM KYIV TO BUFFALO

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pecially John Wood, for making my stay so comfortable. I'm also very grateful to Kemper Lewis, Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and Chair Jeffrey Errington of the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering for the opportunities that, I hope, will grow into future collaborations and publications.

A special thank you to Haiqing Lin, Jada Mowatt, and the whole research team (Sagnik Das, Narjes Esmaeili, Farhang Pazani, Kai Chen, Emmanuel M. Nsengiyumva); it's real scientific magic when people from all over the world work as one team.

And of course, spe-

cial thanks to Alina Vereshchaka, assistant professor of computer science: you were right, I really had to come to Buffalo so that we could meet.

I also want to thank my home institution in Kyiv, the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine—Rector Vadym Tkachuk, Vice-Rectors Oksana Tonkha and Oleksandr Labenko, the Agrobiological Faculty, and the Department of Analytical and Bioinorganic Chemistry and Water Quality for helping make this trip possible.

I believe this is only the beginning of a new chapter of cooperation between our universities. To all Ukrainian scientists: I truly encourage you to apply for BridgeU-SA 2026. This program really makes dreams come true. ♦



Professor Kravchenko speaking to a UB class about her work in Ukraine

ARI RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS GRANT FROM THE ACADEMY OF KOREAN STUDIES

By Bruce Acker

The Academy of Korean Studies (AKS) has awarded UB's Asia Research Institute a "core university grant" that will strengthen UB's position as a regional hub for research and education about Korean language, culture and society.

The five-year, \$900,000 grant was one of only four AKS core university grants awarded globally in the 2025 grant competition.

The grant will build on a recently completed three-year AKS seed grant that UB received in 2022. The seed grant expanded research and learning opportunities related to Korea for faculty and students and significantly strengthened the Korean studies community at UB.

"Not only will this grant be highly beneficial to faculty engaged in Korea-focused research and broaden student involvement in Korean studies, it will position UB as a major center for Korean studies in the U.S.," says Nojin Kwak, vice provost for international education and principal investigator on the grant.

"UB has a remarkable core group of faculty in Korean studies engaged in this grant project who are eager to advance their research and strengthen networks of scholars in their disciplines. At the same time, the grant taps into expanding student enthusiasm for Korean music, dramas, and other forms of Korean culture."

The core university project features a number of programs to further expand support for research in Korean studies and foster scholarly dialogue among faculty and students, including an annual Korean studies conference, two ongoing thematic research hubs, funding for faculty research grants and conference travel, and a lecture series in Korean studies.

The first conference funded by the new grant was AI and Data Science in Education: Insights from South Korea, September 26-27, 2025, organized by Sunha Kim, associate professor in the Departments of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology and Learning and Instruction; and Nojin Kwak, Vice Provost for International Education and Professor of Communication. This was the fourth annual Korean Studies Conference at UB, with the previous three funded by the seed grant.

This year's conference was cosponsored by the UB Institute for Artificial Intelligence and Data Science and took place in the National AI Institute for Exceptional Education in Lockwood Hall.

The research hubs, which are designed to facilitate collaborative projects among scholars and graduate students in the northeastern U.S., include Design Korea, led by Jin Young Song, associate professor in the Department of Architecture, and Korean Diaspora in the U.S., led by Sojung Lim, associate professor and Korea Foundation Professor of Korean Studies in the Department of Sociology and Criminology.

Student-focused activity includes development of new interactive and experiential learning modules for Korean language classes and the launching of a Korean literature society. Grant funding is also available to hire two graduate student assistants and to support undergraduate student participation in the annual Korea America Student Conference.

The project also funds an annual Korea artist-in-residence program. Artists in a variety of fields will conduct workshops and master classes at UB, present guest lectures, and give lecture/demonstrations in local K-12 schools.

The first artist in residence funded by the new grant is Bokyun Byun, winner of the 2018 JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition and currently assistant professor of guitar at the University of North Texas. In addition to her presentations at UB and in local schools, Byun presented a concert in the Mary Seaton Room at Kleinhans Music Hall on October 2, 2025. ♦



Bokyun Byun

Bruce Acker is assistant director of the Asia Research Institute.

UB EXPANDS PARTNERSHIPS WITH VIETNAM

UB has agreed to partner with the University of Danang and Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education, two leading technical universities in Vietnam, on educational and research programs spanning the Internet of Things, embedded systems, telecommunications, and other engineering and technical fields.

The memorandum of understandings, both signed in July, will strengthen the ties between UB and the universities and bolster training opportunities available to students.

The UB delegation was led by Kemper Lewis, dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and Sherene Milizia, director of overseas and intercultural programs in the Office of International Education.

According to the agreement, UB and the University of Danang will forge transfer pathways and student exchanges to support international joint training programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The universities will also collaborate on faculty exchanges and teaching initiatives.

UB will partner with Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education to build unique capstone project

exchanges designed to promote cross-cultural competencies for students. The partnership will lead to the co-development of innovative educational models and best practices, as well.

These agreements, says Lewis, will serve as a milestone in fostering long-term collaboration, promoting knowledge sharing, driving innovation, and, ultimately, expanding collective influence, both regionally and internationally.

With a young population, a rapidly developing economy,

and increasing demand for higher education, Vietnam sends a growing number of students to UB for undergraduate and graduate programs, particularly in engineering and management, says Milizia.

The new agreements leverage the core strengths of each university in engineering and technology. The partnerships also expand UB's international engagement and global reach, which includes more than 40 agreements with universities in Asia and more than 90 agreements with institutions around the world. ♦



Kemper Lewis (3rd from l.) and Sherene Milizia (2nd from l.) at signing

EDUCATION ABROAD PROGRAM HONORED BY IIE

UB's First-Year Global Experience program is among eight programs at colleges and universities across the world that were recently recognized by the Institute of International Education with a 2025 Andrew Heiskell Award for Innovation in International Education.

The UB program received an honorable mention in the "Sustainability" category. Other categories included "Widening Access for International Education," "Student Mobility & Exchange" and "Strategic Partnerships."

UB's First-Year Global Experience offers first-year and new transfer students from all majors the opportunity to develop intercultural communication skills and enhance their ability to live and lead in a global society while at the same time learning about the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Offered in both Costa Rica and the United Kingdom, the program combines a three-credit course with an embedded 10-day study abroad experience during the winter term.

It has attracted a diverse range of students, including first-generation college students and many students who had never traveled outside of the U.S.

"This program has become a signature opportunity for first-year students and has helped to distinguish UB from other SUNY and other public institutions," says Adam Rubin, assistant vice provost and director of education abroad. "Over 200 students submitted a program application last year and with increased funding support, we're confident that the First-Year Global Experience will become a true hallmark of the UB new student experience going forward."

The IIE Heiskell Awards, which promote and honor outstanding initiatives conducted in international higher education, were named in honor of Andrew Heiskell, a former member of the Executive Committee of IIE's Board of Trustees, a renowned international and cultural philanthropist, and long-time supporter of international education. ♦

ERIN DELANEY JOINS UB IMMIGRATION SERVICES AS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

In September 2025, Erin Delaney, Esq. joined UB Immigration Services (UBIS), a unit of the Office of International Education, to fill the newly created position of associate director, reporting to Oscar Budde, Esq., associate vice provost and director.

A highly experienced immigration attorney with seven years of directly relevant work at two local law firms, Delaney is applying her expertise to the growing volume and complexity of employment-based immigration cases handled by UBIS.

The office is the designated legal representative for the university in all employment-based immigration cases, which include H-1b, O-1, PERM, TN and Green Card cases, among others. In an increasingly fraught immigration policy environment, Delaney is helping UBIS support the university's hiring and retention goals.

"In the short period of time that she has served as UBIS's Associate Director," Budde noted, Erin has exceeded all expectations. She has demonstrated capabilities that only the most highly accomplished immigration attorneys hold. Erin is an extremely knowledgeable practitioner, with strategic insights that permit UB to exercise a wide range of immigration options.

"Erin has also shown that she is an excellent administrator, one who functions very effectively in UB's distributed administrative structure. Her organizational skills and familiarity with advanced technology have led to improvements within our office's practices. UBIS is fortunate to have Erin join our ranks."

Delaney earned her JD from the UB School of Law in May 2012 and was admitted to the New York State Bar in February 2013. Since January 2020, she had served as an immigration attorney for Serotte Law Firm LLC, a boutique law firm in downtown Buffalo specializing in immigration law. From 2018-2020, Delaney was an associate attorney in the immigration practice at Hodgson Russ LLP.

Before law school, Delaney earned an MBA from Niagara University and a B.S. in Business Administration, summa

cum laude, from Daemen University, with a specialization in Human Resources and minors in International Business and Mathematics. Prior to specializing in immigration law, Delaney was senior counsel at Counsel Financial II LLC in Buffalo, focusing on complex loan agreements and settlements.

"Law was always something I had considered," Delaney says, "but it was only after I was selected for grand jury duty, and enjoyed going, that I finally decided to apply to law school."

"My desire to positively impact the lives of others is what drew me to immigration law. There is no better feeling than helping someone achieve their dream and knowing that you have forever changed their lives for the better," she adds.

Returning to her alma mater in this new role is especially gratifying. "I feel so lucky to have been given the opportunity to join the wonderful team at UBIS. This position allows me to contribute in a meaningful way to the university where my legal journey began," Delaney says.

"The education, mentorship, and opportunities I obtained through UB Law were critical to shaping my legal career. As a Lifetime Member of the UB Law Alumni Association, I believe it's important to help build pathways to educational and profes-

sional success that will give the next generation an opportunity to build a better future."

At UB Delaney has opportunities to support the institution's internationalization through the hiring and retention of the best faculty and researchers from around the world.

"Working in higher education allows me to advocate for immigrants in broader contexts. Not only do I provide legal support to help departments retain top international talent and help employees accomplish their immigration goals, but this role also allows me to play a part in shaping lasting outcomes and policy at the university through advocacy and collaboration. This, in turn, positively impacts the student experience and ensures UB continues to strengthen its global reach."

UBIS advises on employment-based immigration strategies, monitors changes to immigration policies and regulations, and represents the university before government agencies to help secure proper immigration status, among



ERIN DELANEY JOINS UBIS

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other things. By providing a path for foreign nationals to bring their talents to the United States, this in turn, helps to promote global competencies and celebrate diverse cultural backgrounds at the university.

"I bring a multidisciplinary approach to immigration strategy, regulatory compliance, and stakeholder engagement that directly supports the needs of a diverse, international community of students, faculty, researchers, and staff," Delaney notes.

Immigration law and practice is complex and highly dependent on the specific circumstances of a particular case. "Many people believe immigration is just a matter of filling out forms, and if done correctly, their case will be completed quickly," she says.

"Clients are often encouraged by a friend's story about how fast and easy their process seemed. In reality, there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution to immigration cases. No two cases are the same, and even two very similar cases could be reviewed and adjudicated differently."

"Immigration law is complex, evidentiary requirements are often demanding, and backlogs can span many years. Rules, policies, and governmental resources change frequently, so what was true a year ago - or even yesterday - may no longer apply. While the immigration journey can sometimes be lengthy, the hope is that the benefits will

outweigh the rest in the long run."

She finds it highly rewarding to be in a position to advise and assist clients in challenging immigration situations. "I've helped clients navigate changes in federal immigration policy, executive orders, travel bans, and urgent cross-border challenges, all while ensuring continuity in employment and maintenance of status. I have worked with companies of all sizes, HR managers, and individual applicants to align immigration strategies with organizational and personal goals, mitigate risk, and ensure compliance."

"Navigating a constantly changing legal landscape can be challenging, particularly when the changes are abrupt, inconsistently implemented, and lack clarity, but I feel very fortunate to be able to guide others through these uncertain times to achieve a positive, sometimes life-changing, outcome. The most challenging, hard-fought cases are often the most rewarding."

"Effective collaboration begins with trust and open communication. When clients share all relevant information, we can properly assess risks and explore every available option. I make it a priority to listen carefully to client concerns, explain legal concepts in clear, comprehensible terms, and set realistic expectations. Although no specific outcome can ever be guaranteed, I want my clients to know that we share the same goal - to achieve the immigration result that best supports their aspirations and future plans." ♦

EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN NIGERIA

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— a model that centers the knowledge, priorities and visions of local communities rather than importing pre-set frameworks.

"This plan focuses on building local capacity," he says. "It empowers communities to define what meaningful education looks like and co-creates a research model around it. That is exactly what the Spencer Foundation is supporting."

Mbah sees this as just the beginning. Through development of a new Center for Experiential Learning and Innovation in Enugu, he envisions opportunities for UB faculty and students to contribute through residencies, fellowships and academic exchanges. "UB can give, but also benefit," he says. "This work opens the door for reciprocal partnerships that elevate both institutions."

And with the possibility of a Spencer Transformative Research Grant — a potential multi-million-dollar follow-on grant — on the horizon, the team is already dreaming of what's possible. ♦

Charles Anzalone is a news content editor for University Communications.

RETURNING TO BEIJING

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recruitment brochures, and I spent the week encouraging students to study somewhere — anywhere — in the United States.

This time around I could not, in good faith, urge them to come to the U.S., given the President's attacks on foreign students. A few, including Samuel, still expressed interest. If they do come, their enthusiasm will enliven whatever classes they take.

For now, I will have to be satisfied that I was able to meet them, learn from them, and offer them a few insights about American history. As one student wrote on the CNU postcard he gave me as a parting gift, "From Buffalo to Beijing — your words stay." ♦

Erik R. Seeman is a professor of history at UB and twice a visiting faculty member at Capital Normal University, UB's longstanding partner in Beijing.

UB RESEARCH DRIVING EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN NIGERIA

By Charles Anzalone

An ambitious plan to start an “educational revolution” in the Enugu State of Nigeria, adapting learning models developed at UB, has taken hold in a key region of Africa’s most populous nation.

Thanks to a Spencer Foundation Vision Grant, UB history professor Ndubueze Mbah’s mission to reform the state’s elementary and secondary school system using research as a guide is already producing tangible results, with more to come. The Vision Grant is a one-year, \$75,000 planning grant awarded by the Spencer Foundation to support early-stage transformative education research.



Enugu State, Nigeria is scaling up Smart Green Schools

As many as 260 Smart Green Schools have either been built or are under construction, all committed to making experiential learning the centerpiece of their curriculum, according to Mbah, associate professor of history and commissioner of education in Enugu. This combination of new schools and a project-based curriculum will serve approximately 260,000 children across the state.

“Now across the state, 260 Smart Green Schools are being constructed simultaneously,” says Mbah. “Some are already completed. Teachers are being trained. Students are being onboarded.”

This broad reform effort is taking place in a country confronting serious and widely recognized educational challenges. According to Mbah, these include inadequate infrastructure, acute teacher shortages, poor pupil-to-teacher ratios and a lack of qualified educators capable of delivering the basic curriculum while leveraging educational technologies.

These systemic barriers have produced what international agencies like the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO and

Nigeria’s Ministry of Education have called a “learning crisis,” regarded as the greatest threat to the country’s economic development.

“After four years of schooling, 50% of K-6 pupils cannot read a single word in English,” says Mbah. “Even those who can read often struggle with comprehension. After six years of schooling, half still cannot solve simple subtraction problems.”

Students learn through hands-on projects aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals while developing 21st-century skills and competencies.

When tasked with re-envisioning education for the state, Mbah turned to the Instructional Innovation team in UB’s Office of Curriculum, Assessment and Teaching Transformation (CATT), and its PEARL Project Framework for Innovative Teaching.

Working with educators there, Mbah co-developed the Enugu Experiential Learning Curriculum, featuring innovation challenges that engage students in problem-solving around real-world issues, often using local materials and resources. Students learn through hands-on projects aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while developing 21st-century skills and competencies.

Piloted successfully at the Owo Smart Green School Campus in Enugu, the curriculum is now scaling rapidly, alongside construction of the 260 schools.

“The Vision Grant provides critical planning support for developing a transformative research model,” says Mbah. “We have seen impact already, but we need better ways to gather data, track outcomes and make adjustments as we go. That is what this grant enables.”

Because experiential learning is a new paradigm in the region, UB educators emphasize there is no established baseline and no existing system to assess its impact. But the signs of transformation are already visible, they say.

The Spencer Vision Grant funds development of a community-based participatory research model, with stories, interviews and firsthand reflections from students, teachers, parents and local leaders serving as a primary source of data. This is more than collecting stories, organizers say. The model aims to “build a methodology that is responsive, culturally grounded and capable of guiding training, professional development and continuous improvement.”

For Mbah, this is a rare example of “decolonial” research”

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MIDDLE EAST STUDIES INITIATIVE EXPANDS

With funding support from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the Office of International Education, the Middle East Studies Initiative (MESI) was launched in 2023 under the direction of Hani Khafipour, clinical assistant professor of history to bolster curricular offerings relating to the Middle East and Islam across a range of CAS departments.

A native of Iran who specializes in the intellectual history of that country, the political and religious culture of the early Middle East and Islamic mysticism, Khafipour recently authored the book *Mantle of the Sufi Kings: Political Sufism and the Rise of Early Modern Iran* (Cambridge UP, 2025).

In Khafipour's own department, a number of new courses have recently been created: HIS 199 (Mystics, Poets, Kings: Readings in Medieval Islamic Literature), a UB Seminar; HIS 205 (History of the Middle East); HIS 306 (Politics of Film and Literature), a Global Pathway course; HIS 373 (US-West Asia Relations); and HIS 425 (Early Modern Empires of the Near East).

An 18-credit minor in Middle East Studies is now available, drawing on courses in Africana and American Studies, Art History, Global Gender and Sexuality Studies, History, and Political Science.

A new three-course Middle East Studies Microcredential was launched in fall 2025 to provide students with a deeper and more historically grounded understanding of the Middle East.

MESI involves several participating departments including Africana and American Studies, Art, English, Media Study, and Romance Languages and Literatures as well as the Asia Research Institute, the Asian Studies Program, the Gender Institute and the Humanities Institute.

Since 2023, MESI has organized public lectures and workshops by leading scholars, including: Behnaz Mirzai,

professor at Brock University in Canada, "From Slavery to Citizenship: The Journey of an Enslaved African in the Ottoman Empire and Iran," Oct. 25, 2023; Kambiz Ghanea-Bassiri, professor at Carlton College, "Race and Islam in America," April 10, 2024 (Humanities Institute); Dr. Jamillah Karim, "Muslim Women and the Black Freedom Movement," Oct.

23, 2024; Ünver Rüstem, associate professor at Johns Hopkins, "Shown in a Lifelike Way: Ottoman Costume Albums and the Art of Self-Representation," March 3, 2025; and John Ghazvinian, "A Fractured Friendship: Iran-US Relations in Historical Perspective" Oct 1, 2025.

Fall 2025 saw the launch of Middle East Student Club in fall 2025 to foster interest among students in the region and the creation of Short Film and Media Grants Program for students: "Bridging Worlds: The Middle East



through Art, Culture and Activism."

In 2026, plans for MESI include: expanding the course offerings within the Micro-Credential; increasing public engagement through additional lectures, symposia, and film series; deepening student involvement through MESI's Club and Grants; building new partnerships with local organizations for experiential learning opportunities; exploring external grant possibilities to expand the Initiatives capability; and further strengthening student enrollment and retention.

In addition to Khafipour, the MESI Steering committee includes Sam Bell, professor of political science; Berin Golonu, assistant professor of Islamic Art; Walt Hakala, associate professor of English; Tanya Shilina-Conte, associate professor of English and Global Film Studies; and Camilo Trumper, associate professor of Latin American History. ♦

STAVRIDIS OFFERS INSIDER'S VIEW OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS

By Charles Anzalone

It is critical that the United State remains supportive of Ukraine. And if we do that, our allies will stand by us and Ukraine, and we can stop Putin."

James Stavridis, former supreme allied commander of NATO

Former supreme allied commander of NATO commanding 150,000 troops in Afghanistan. Four-star admiral. The longest-serving combatant commander in recent U.S. history. Five years as dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Author of 15 published books on leadership, character, risk and the oceans, including a New York Times bestseller on a fictional next world war. Once a Democratic candidate for vice president.



James Stavridis speaking at the Center for the Arts (Photo: Nancy Parisi)

President Satish K. Tripathi had one more way to introduce James Stavridis, the inaugural speaker for UB's 2025-26 Distinguished Speakers Series, who charmed and intrigued an abundant crowd October 21 in the Mainstage Theatre in the Center for the Arts. Stavridis, Tripathi said, was the senior military analyst for CNN.

"Actually, he was on CNN twice today," he noted.

Stavridis walked onstage after listening to the impressive introduction, came to the front of the stage to be closer to his audience and pronounced it an "intimate" crowd. So he could tell them something.

"I have got to tell you, when people hear that introduction, supreme allied commander and all that stuff, and then they actually see me, they tend to have two reactions," Stavridis said. "Let's be honest. One is 'I thought you would be taller.' The other one is 'Stavridis, if you are really that cool, why were you not a Navy fighter pilot? Like Goose and Maverick.'"

Yes, let's be honest here.

Stavridis was very cool, indeed. Switching between a clear-eyed and insider's view of the real threats to global stability and a pragmatic "cautious optimism," Stavridis broke down the multiple threats throughout the world with a surprisingly easy-to-follow discourse, pausing to mix in levity and humanity.

For the leadoff in the Distinguished Speakers Series, it was an impressive and tough-to-match appearance.

In a measured but determined delivery — perhaps unexpected for an admiral — Stavridis talked about "geopolitical risk" and then opportunities. "What should we be doing about it?"

The Middle East. Ukraine. Taiwan. South Korea. Stavridis led the audience through each global flashpoint.

He called Bashar al-Assad, recently deposed dictator of Syria, "this monster" who ran to Russian President Vladimir Putin after his unspeakable, repressive regime collapsed.

"All of the proxies of Iran — Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria — have all been diminished and all of that pushes Iran off.

"In addition to that, the Trump administration, in a very bold and good move, took out a chunk of Iranian nuclear program in a pretty precision strike," said Stavridis. "It didn't eliminate it, but it knocked it back significantly. So when you step back from the tragedy of Gaza and you look broadly at the Middle East, there are reasons to be very cautiously optimistic. It's what comes after for Gaza.

"It will unlock the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which will then be able to recognize Israel. Israel will be this flywheel economically that will access Arab capital, and the prospects for the region look pretty good, particularly if Iran can be boxed out of the equation."

Showing easy-to-decipher maps and graphics, Stavridis switched to Ukraine. He said he wanted to dispel any "magical thinking" that reasoned that if only the West would have shown more respect to Putin, he wouldn't have invaded Ukraine. Or if only NATO hadn't expanded at the end of the Cold War, "this would have never happened."

"Here's the problem," Stavridis said. "His name is Vladimir Putin. We call it the war of the Ukraine. This is the war of Putin's ego. He seeks to recreate the old Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Putin wants Ukraine to conquer it.

"He has lost a million young Russia men, killed, wounded or departing the country. Here's why he wants Ukraine. Not because it's part of Mother Russia. He wants Ukraine because it's full of resources. It's the breadbasket of Europe. By the way, it has 40 million subjects in his mind. Putin covets it.

"I pray every night Donald Trump gives the Ukrainians

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UB JOINS GLOBAL SEMICONDUCTOR NETWORK

By Emily Gac

UB has officially joined SEMI, a leading global industry association representing the semiconductor and electronics manufacturing supply chain. The move, sponsored by the Center for Supply Chain Analytics in the School of Management and the Center for Advanced Semiconductor Technology in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, connects UB directly to a powerful international network.

For UB, the timing is significant. New York has become a key player in the national effort to expand semiconductor manufacturing, fueled by large-scale investments and workforce development initiatives, including the \$40 million NY SMART I-Corridor Tech Hub. Access to SEMI's resources helps UB contribute directly to that momentum — linking education, research and industry collaboration.

"SEMI brings together leaders from across the semiconductor ecosystem," says Jonathan Bird, director of the

Center for Advanced Semiconductor Technology. "Our membership positions UB at the heart of conversations driving innovation in New York State's growing semiconductor industry and aligns with the university's commitment to the Tech Hub."

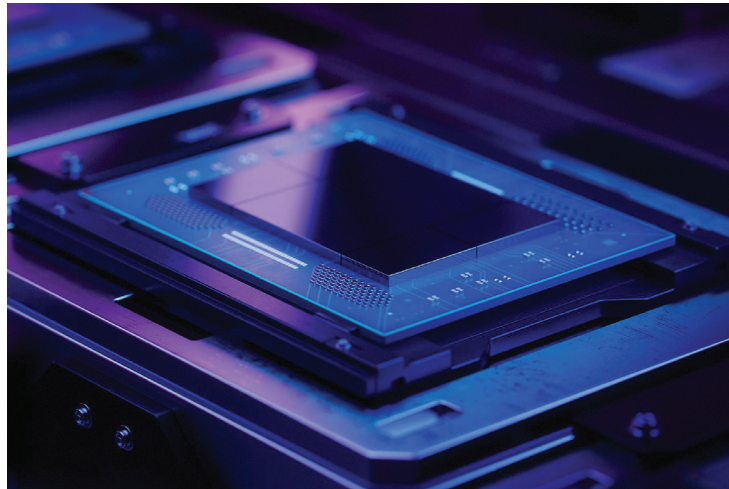
In addition, anyone with a UB email address can now access SEMI member benefits, which include discounted registration fees for conferences, training programs and other professional development opportunities.

"SEMI membership extends beyond our research centers.

"It gives our community a chance to connect with the global semiconductor industry while strengthening UB's role in advancing analytics and operations research

that support it," says Jennifer Flagg, director of the Center for Supply Chain Analytics.

Emily Gac is associate director of marketing for the School of Management.



STAVRIDIS ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS

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Tomahawk missiles."

Assisted by moderator Jacob Kathman, chair of the Department of Political Science, Stavridis worked his way around the globe, discussing China and North Korea, giving the audience a cogent description of the world of risks, each with its own opportunity of stability of democracy and capitalism over autocratic repressive regimes.

"It is critical that the United State remains supportive of Ukraine. And if we do that, our allies will stand by us and Ukraine, and we can stop Putin."

Kathman asked Stavridis what was his most important message of leadership.

"The importance of your peers," Stavritis said. "Most of us who study the practice of leadership have figured it out. Take care of the people who work for you. That pertains whether you are supreme allied commander of NATO with 1.5 million people working for you or running a team of 12 at Google. Most people get that you want to be loyal to your boss.

"Loyalty up. Care, concern, compassion down."

Stavridis closed with thoughts that he said help him sleep at night. The first was alliances.

"If we can keep the band together, and I think we can," he said, "that is a strong comparative advantage."

The last was a big hit in the CFA.

"The history of this century will be remembered for the rise of women," he said. "The leader who has handled Donald Trump the best — and he is a handful — is Claudia Sheinbaum, the president of Mexico. Here is a Jewish woman elected to the presidency of the most Catholic country in the world. A woman elected to the most patriarchal country in the world.

"The pragmatic value of all that human capital coming online, and it's going to happen in this century. ... As that unfolds, the human potential and all the sensibilities of women brought into real production value, that's pretty remarkable.

"Martin Luther King said the moral arc of the universe is long, but it bends toward justice. The moral arc of the universe is long. It bends toward women.

"That helps me sleep at night." ♦

UB, DALIAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY STRENGTHEN 40-YEAR PARTNERSHIP

By Jacqueline Ghosen

The School of Management and the Office of International Education hosted a team of four academic leaders from the Dalian University of Technology Oct. 28-31, 2025. DUT is a longstanding partner university, dating back to 1984 when they first collaborated with UB to establish the first-ever U.S.-style MBA in China.

Guests from Dalian University of Technology's School of Economics and Management included Xiaobing Song, professor and associate dean of full-time graduate education, international cooperation and accreditation, and case research and teaching; Yongjian Ding, associate professor and associate dean of undergraduate education, undergraduate admissions and professional-degree graduate education; Jinghua Wang, associate dean of organization, communications and labor union affairs; and Zhaoguang Xu, associate professor and assistant dean, who assists in international cooperation and accreditation.

Representing the School of Management were Dean Ananth Iyer; David Murray, associate dean for undergraduate programs; Natalie Simpson, associate dean for graduate programs; Nallan Suresh, associate dean for faculty, research and centers; Charles Wang, associate professor of operations management and strategy; and Joseph Alutto, who was dean of the School of Management when the partnership with Dalian began. Also joining the group was John Wood, senior associate provost for international education.

On Oct. 29, the group signed agreements to collaborate on two programs:

- An MBA/MS 1+1 program where students from DUT earn an Executive MBA from DUT and a one-year MS degree from UB.
- A 2+2 PhD program where students earn PhD degrees from DUT and UB and spend two years at each school.

"Our partnership with Dalian University of Technology continues to expand opportunities for students to engage in rigorous, cross-cultural learning," Iyer said.

"These new programs deepen the pipeline of globally minded professionals who will shape the future of business and innovation in both nations."

The visitors also attended a lunch hosted by the vice provost for international education, met with professors who have taught at Dalian and were guests at a dinner



DUT delegates join Dean Iyer, Joseph Alutto (2nd from r.) and colleagues (Photo: Meredith Forrest Kulwicki)

with faculty, staff and alumni hosted by Rich Products at Rich's Atrium.

On Oct. 30, they met with School of Management center directors and other faculty on campus, then took a tour of Niagara Falls, followed by a casual dinner.

"For many years, the School of Management has been a pioneer in forging innovative global programs that leverage the strengths of each partner," said Nojin Kwak, vice provost for international education.

"Building on the legacy of the earlier Dalian MBA program, this new initiative confirms the school's continuing importance for management education in China." ♦

Jacqueline Ghosen is assistant dean and director, marketing and communications, for the School of Management.

RETURNING TO THE CLASSROOM IN BEIJING

By Erik R. Seeman

You might think that students who had to sit through a 2.5-hour lecture would take the fifteen-minute break to leave the room or stretch their legs. But there they were, not once but five days in a row, surrounding me during the break and eagerly asking me questions.



Erik Seeman with his students at Capital Normal University in Beijing

In June 2025 I returned to Beijing after six years to offer the same English-language mini-course I did in 2019. The topic was “America to 1763” and the location was Capital Normal University (CNU), an institution founded as a teacher’s college (or “normal school”), where many students still prepare to be educators.

UB’s late, lamented Confucius Institute was jointly administered with CNU, which is how I originally made the connection to UB’s partner university in China. This time I worked directly with the CNU School of History to set up the one-week course.

At a time of declining humanities enrollments in the United States, I was impressed that 97 students signed up. Most were from CNU, but about a dozen came from cities all over China. Reflecting CNU’s overall demographics, about two-thirds of the students were women.

For each of the five lectures I assigned a reading. Mindful that they were working in a non-native language, I kept the readings short, just a few pages each, more informational than argumentative.

My first surprise came at the very start of the week. After a three-sentence self-introduction in woeful Chinese, I switched back to English and asked if there were any questions about the day’s reading on the great pre-Columbian city of Cahokia. At most American universities this would

be a “crickets” moment: uncomfortable silence as no one wants to seem overly eager.

Instead, hands went up. Not a roomful of hands, but three or four, and the questions set the tone for the week.

They demonstrated an effort to grapple with the readings and – even more exciting to me – they emerged from knowledge and experiences different from my own. As a result, the questions were fresh, incisive, and sometimes challenging.

At the start of that first lecture, one student asked, “Don’t archaeologists have to speculate more than historians who work with documents?” This question subtly undermined the authority of the assigned reading, which had glossed over the question of speculation and presented its points as uncontested facts.

Throughout the lecture I kept coming back to this issue, pointing out moments of guesswork in my own presentation, and talking about how historians who work with documents do plenty of their own speculating.

My students were also willing to ask questions during the lecture, something I always encourage, often to no avail in a big room.

As I was talking about Cahokia’s decline after 1250, a student who uses the English name of Samuel raised his hand. “Is it possible that Cahokia collapsed because the leaders were no longer able to administer the city effectively?”

I’m no expert on Cahokia but I’ve read several books and a dozen articles on the city. To my memory, none address that topic, which evidently was shaped by Samuel’s knowledge of Chinese history. Chinese dynasties have risen and fallen on their administrative capabilities.

But scholars of Cahokia simply don’t think in terms of urban administration. Part of the reason is we lack the written sources for pre-Columbian North America that exist in great quantities to document Chinese governmental actions.

But I think it also reflects an assumption that Native American societies were more impacted by environmental conditions than governmental strategies.

And so the week went, with good questions during lectures and then the daily scrum while we were supposed to be having a fifteen-minute break.

In the six years since I had been to Beijing, some changes were evident. China is now an almost entirely cashless society, which is wonderfully convenient but left me worried about the tightening grip of the surveillance state.

The change that most impacted me, however, came from the U.S. side. In 2019 I brought a folder full of UB

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UB RANKED AMONG TOP 20 INSTITUTIONS IN LATEST OPEN DOORS REPORT

UB rose among the ranks of colleges and universities hosting international students, climbing four spots last year to No. 20 in the nation, according to the latest census by the Institute of International Education.

UB reported a total of 9,033 international students from 106 countries in the fall of 2024. That was up 7.8 percent from the year prior.

The figures include the 4,035 UB students who continued in the U.S. with postgraduate optional practical training. OPT allows for a period of temporary employment in their field of study.

"UB's rise to No. 20 nationally highlights the university's strong global reputation and our continued success in attracting top international talent," said Nojin Kwak, vice provost for International Education.

"International students enrich our campus academically, culturally and economically, and they play a vital role in UB's mission as a world-class public research university."

This is the 23rd straight year that UB has been listed among the top 30 in the institute's "Open Doors Report on International Exchange." The annual report is considered a benchmark for higher education.

UB came in at No. 24 in last year's report; No. 23 in 2023; No. 25 in 2022; and No. 27 in both 2021 and 2020.

Nationally, U.S. colleges and universities hosted 1.2 million international students during the 2024-25 academic year, the latest figures available. That's a 5 percent increase from the previous year, according to the report.

But based on a snapshot of this fall, the report projects a 17 percent drop in new international students enrolling at U.S. colleges and universities for the first time and a 12 percent decrease in international graduate students. Both contributed to a 1 percent overall decline in the nation's international college enrollment this fall, according to the report's sampling of 825 U.S. institutions.

UB experienced similar shifts this fall, with graduate enrollment moderating after several years of historic growth and undergraduate international enrollment continuing to rise.

"UB's current enrollment trends are fully aligned with what institutions across the country are seeing," said Christopher Connor, vice provost for enrollment management.

"The Open Doors report reflects our long-term momentum, while the fall 2025 data shows the normalization of graduate enrollment nationally following several extraordinary post-pandemic cohort years," Connor said.

UB continues to strengthen global partnerships, expand recruitment initiatives, and invest in services that support international students from application to graduation and beyond.

The university remains committed to fostering a globally diverse campus community and advancing its mission as a leading international research university.

The release of this year's Open Doors report on Nov. 17, 2025 coincided with the start of International Education Week, an annual initiative to celebrate the benefits of international education and exchange.

Data shows:

- The top five universities remained unchanged from last year. New York University had the largest international enrollment among U.S. institutions with 27,532 followed by Northeastern, 22,465; Columbia, 20,733; Arizona State, 20,368; and the University of Southern California, 17,884.
- Among universities in New York State, only NYU and Columbia hosted more international students than UB last fall.
- At UB, the largest number of international students came from India, 3,116, followed by China, 751; South Korea, 167; Bangladesh, 136; and Canada, 133.

In a separate, but related report based on the enrollment data, NAESA: Association of International Educators estimated that the international students at UB contributed \$213.3 million to the local economy and supported 1,801 jobs during the 2024-25 academic year. ♦

[This piece originally appeared in UBNOW.](#)



International Student Welcome in CFA (Photo: Meredith Forrest Kulwicki)

A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF WATER IN ARCHITECTURE

By Brian Carter

Water is an international priority. In 2013 a UN Report noted that 2.2 billion people lacked access to safely managed drinking water services globally. A report a year later confirmed that a tenth of the world's population lived in countries with hypocritical water stress.

Prompted by international drought and deluge, a graduate research studio in architecture at UB this fall focused on water.

The studio first collaborated with a notable architect from India. Harsh Vardhan Jain, the founder of Studio Juggernaut, a global practice based in Delhi and Tokyo, worked with students to develop understandings of the impact

of water in India and develop ideas for a derelict site in Hauz Khas Village close to an historic tank in Delhi.

Twelve graduate students went on to design new buildings to restore the site, foster water research and advance local educational initiatives. Working with Harsh Vardhan Jain in Buffalo was invaluable while conversations with Ish-tiak Rafiuttin – a UB graduate and notable architect from Bangladesh – offered additional insights into water and architecture in Asia.

These studies were subsequently advanced with conversations with colleagues from Nigeria and at UB. Working closely with specialists in education and experiential learning the studio was invited to prepare design proposals inspired by water and in the context of an ambitious new school building program in Enugu (see p. 7). That program

has seen the construction of a series of new schools across the city with each planned around an open-air courtyard.

After meeting with a spokesman for Enugu's Ministry of Education and Mara Huber – an educational specialist who is actively engaged in the development of experiential learning programs in the Enugu Schools—UB's archi-

tecture students were asked to develop ideas that could focus educational programs on water and be sited in the courtyard of the recently opened school at Owo.

Their design proposals explored the collection and storage of rainwater, hydro-power and the introduction of techniques to improve water quality, health and hygiene into experiential education programs that could be prototyped and tested at Owo School and subsequently adopted at other schools in the region.

Buffalo is also a city defined by water. Located on the Great Lakes – the largest

group of freshwater lakes on Earth – water is fundamental to the city's history and economy and continues to shape its planning and architecture.

Consequently, and after studying water in Asia and Africa, UB students went on to develop proposals for a Great Lakes Institute—a facility that could integrate research, public engagement, education and experiential learning related to water.

The studio also continued to advance an international focus and worked with Caterina Mantegazza, an architect from Europe whose professional work has included studies of water in Lisbon. ♦

Brian Carter is professor of architecture in the School of Architecture and Planning.



Guest critic Caterina Mantegazza from Italy in studio with MArch students

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tine's future by examining previous attempts to negotiate peace between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. She examined Israeli and Palestinian public opinion regarding a two-state solution over several decades, and the regional and international legitimacy of such a solution. She emphasized the peacebuilding initiatives necessary to for both polities to live with freedom, dignity and human right.

In closing, Roger Des Forges mentioned Nur Masalha's book, *Palestine: A Four Thousand Year History*, Rashid Khalidi's book, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine*, and Noam Chomsky's and Ilan Pappé's book, *On Palestine*, and noted comparisons between those histories and that of China to be addressed in a future symposium. ♦

Shaun Irlam is associate professor of comparative literature and co-chair of the Alison Des Forges Memorial Committee.

MEXICAN STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT REPURPOSING DEMOLITION WASTE

By Darra Kubera

Fourteen undergraduate architecture students from Mexico spent a week at UB in October 2025 testing new ways to turn demolition waste into innovative design.

The School of Architecture and Planning's Fabrication Workshop was the hub for the school's second annual short-term study abroad program with Tecnológico de Monterrey (TEC) in Monterrey.

The program was co-led by Christopher Romano, assistant professor in the Department of Architecture, and TEC Professor Diego Rodríguez — in partnership with 2025-26 Banham Fellow Celia Chaussabel.

The week kicked off with a tour of the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, followed by an introduction to the Fabrication Workshop — and safety procedures — by Stephanie Cramer, director of the Fabrication Workshop and clinical assistant professor of architecture.

Chaussabel then provided an overview of her workshop, "Trash to Table: Digital Fabrication Methods for Designing with Demolition Waste," where the objective would be to work creatively within the constraints of digital fabrication tools (CNC routing and water jet cutting) to test new possibilities for reusing building materials.

Students were divided into four groups that were each assigned an object and a digital fabrication machine and method. Chaussabel challenged the students with several questions: Why do we reuse materials? How are architects currently engaging in the circular economy? What role do narratives and aesthetics play in reuse? How are digital fabrication and visualization currently being used in the circular economy (3D scanning, AR, VR) and what are its other potentials?

Throughout the week, students worked to turn these "trash" objects into tables.

"Hearing the students' perspectives about what they wanted to design — really getting their design interests or their views on what these objects should become — was the best part of this experience," says Chaussabel. "We started with things like a sink or a bathtub, and to some people it brought about a childhood reaction. It was fun getting to know the student's personalities through how they interpreted the objects," she says, adding that this will tie into the work she's doing for her final Banham fellowship project.

The first group cut a large slice out of a cast iron and

enamel tub to make their table, the second group used the waterjet to cut a marble piece into smaller parts with slots, group three milled into the top of their found wood form and group four turned halves of a sink into a table.

In addition to the discarded objects, more standard building materials, such as 2-by-4 lumber, scrap sheet metal, 1.5-inch steel angle, all-thread, scrap EPS foam, ¾-inch plywood, and more were available to the students.

Architecture Dean Julia Czerniak stopped in mid-week for a design consultation.

"Our school doesn't really have all of the machines and tools that UB has, so it's been really cool to see what kind of level the models of architecture can get," said visiting student Mariana Gastelum Diaz. "We didn't know what our piece of 'trash' was before, but we think it was some sort of theater prop. It was spray-painted silver, so we were thinking it was a part of a stage set, but we made it into a table."



Celia Chaussabel and Monterrey students in the Fabrication Workshop (Douglas Levere)

We were the only team working with wood; everyone else was working with the water jet."

When asked what she'll take back home after this experience, Diaz said: "Celia is really good with design, especially with furniture, which I haven't really done before. To see a different point of view of design, along with the experience the teachers here gave us, that's the main thing that I'm going to be taking with me."

As the architectural discipline grapples with its role in resource depletion, carbon emissions and waste generation, there's a growing urgency to stop sourcing new materials and reuse materials from existing buildings instead.

One challenge to integrating reused materials into current building practices is technical: The process of inventorying, de-constructing and re-processing reused mate-

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GLOBAL HEALTH INITIATIVES HOSTS LATIN AMERICAN DELEGATION

By Grace Lazzara

On Oct. 10, 2025, the Office of Global Health Initiatives (OGHI) in the School of Public Health and Health Professions hosted a group of eleven health professionals from across Central and South America from entities including Argentina's Ministry of Health, Fundacion Salud Integral de Guatemala and the Peruvian Army General Health Command.

The meeting was initiated by the International Institute of Buffalo's/U.S. Department of State's ongoing International Visitor Leadership program, with the visitors scheduled to travel the United States for three weeks looking for insights and innovations for pressing public health issues throughout their regions. They arrived at SPHHP ready with translators and big questions, including those focused on:

- public health infrastructure integration across urban and rural settings
- addressing health challenges through academic-community partnerships
- local and state coordination to strengthen infectious disease response

- The importance of expanding access to preventive care

OGHI's director, Professor Lina Mu, welcomed the group to SPHHP and led an expansive discussion of how the school integrates multidisciplinary, community-based research, international partnerships, and student engagement to develop sustainable solutions to complex public health challenges.

SPHHP and School of Nursing faculty outlined areas of research, including environmental health, infectious disease and more, and community initiatives like the new mobile units Health on Wheels and the Seneca Babcock Food Pan-



SPHHP faculty host colleagues from Latin America

try, run by public health faculty and students.

Questions from the visitors ranged from how UB prioritizes the community projects it's involved in and what training students receive before they take on field work, to issues related to specific research topics including food and water insecurity. ♦

Grace Lazzara is director, marketing and communications, for the School of Public Health and Health Professions.

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rials for a second life is currently less efficient than their new counterparts. Another challenge is cultural perceptions around waste. Building materials are automatically considered waste after a single use, to be downcycled or disposed of in a landfill. Apart from materials that have historical significance or are expensive to source new, typically there is little value seen in saving building materials.

Chaussabel's workshop challenged students to consider another type of value — the ability for reused materials to produce narratives. "When an object is dislodged from one place and 'mis-used' in another context, the 'mis-use' makes visible that the object used to belong somewhere else," Chaussabel said.

Julia Hunt, director of digital fabrication and clinical assistant professor in the Department of Architecture, called the week "a really exciting test for our machines, and myself because the students were working with really weird objects. The exploratory aspect of working with these physical things, and the fact that the students got engaged

really quickly, has led to some cool projects. This is the second year we've hosted students from TEC and it's always a very fun group."

Outside of the workshop, students took part in various cultural experiences throughout the week, including walking tours of the Parkside neighborhood, downtown Buffalo and downtown Rochester. They visited Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House and Torn Space Theater, explored the Allentown neighborhood and Silo City, and had a tour of First Unitarian Church of Rochester.

The four-day workshop was co-led by Romano and Chaussabel, with assistance from Hunt, who contributed significantly to the project's execution. Additional partners were architecture faculty members Steph Cramer, Greg Serweta, Greg Delaney, Elaine Chow, Miguel Guitart, Jin Young Song, Erkin Özay, Julia Czerniak, Mauro Cringoli and Lukas Fetzko, as well as historian Bill Fugate and Paul Lang, managing principal of CarminaWood Design. ♦

Darra Kubera is director of communications for the School of Architecture and Planning.

ADDRESSING HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

By Shaun Irlam

In April 2025, the Alison Des Forges Memorial Committee once again hosted its annual Symposium which invites scholars to join in a vigorous debate about contemporary human rights issues. This time, we welcomed scholars to discuss the topic of "Israel and Palestine: Human Rights and Configurations for the Future."

As always, our aim was to offer thoughtful, informed, tempered, and intelligent dialogue reflecting multiple perspectives. It is a tribute both to the University at Buffalo, and to our wonderful speakers and guests that, despite these acrimonious times, we convened a cordial and lively exchange of ideas without disruption.

The Committee assembled for the Committee assembled a stellar roster of speakers: Geoffrey Levin, assistant professor of Middle Eastern and Jewish Studies, Emory University; Kenneth Roth, visiting professor, School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University; Mohammad Fadel, professor of law, University of Toronto; Nader Hashemi, associate professor of Middle East and Islamic Politics, Georgetown University; Annelle Sheline, research fellow, Middle East Program, Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft; Michael Barnett, University Professor of International Affairs and Political Science, George Washington University; and Yael Aronoff, professor of Political Science/International Relations, Michigan State University.

The symposium began with a historical overview of today's crisis in Gaza. In his talk titled "The American and Jewish Politics of Palestinian Rights After 1948," Levin retraced how Americans have discussed Palestinian rights for over a century, starting with debates around the 1917 Balfour declaration and ending with the 1978 Camp David Accords. He explained how various political factions shaped a discourse that often minimized the rights of Palestinians and framed the Palestinian plight solely as a humanitarian matter.

Speaking on “War Crimes and Accountability in Gaza”, Roth suggested that the conflict often results in the two sides talking at cross-purposes. He argued that international humanitarian law provides a framework for medi-

ing the conflict that is neither pro-Israeli nor pro-Palestinian but instead pro-civilian.

He used this framework to assess the conduct of the Israeli Defense Forces and Hamas since the vicious attack against Israel on October 7, 2023.

Fadel then spoke on "Palestine, Natural Right and the Future of International Law." He argued that, after World War I, the global powers claimed to reject imperialism and affirm self-determination, according to which standard Palestine merited independence.

However, Zionist leaders invoked their “natural right” to the land of Israel, defended a colonial view of self-determination based on a people’s putative level of “civilizational advancement,” and contended that Palestinians were not ready for self-rule.

Hashemi concluded the morning session with "The Global Divide Over Israel and Palestine." He proposed that, compared with other conflicts, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict generates the most intense acrimony because it archives two dominant political traumas of the 20th century: the Holocaust and the struggle for decolonization.

While the formerly imperial West views Israel through the Nazi Judeocide, the formerly colonized Arab-Islamic world and the Global South view Israel through the memories of colonial occupation. Each side thus views the struggle through

different historical experiences and ethical frameworks.

Sheline began the afternoon session with “Human Rights in U.S. Foreign Policy Towards the Middle East: Comparing Biden and Trump.” Trump, she noted, demonstrates consistent disdain for human rights.

Conversely, Biden promised that concern for human rights would guide U.S. foreign policy yet his Administration enabled the destruction of Gaza and the killing of Palestinian civilians by providing the necessary weapons. She argued that this double standard reinforces the cynicism that human rights are a smokescreen for national interests.

Barnett spoke next on "The Case for Looking Beyond the Right of National Self-Determination." He questioned the future of any two-state solution and suggested that it has been overtaken by the de facto incursions of Israel into Palestinian territories since the 1967 war and the ongoing expropriations of Palestinian lands in the West Bank.

In her talk on "Forging Paths to a Two-State Solution," Aronoff countered Barnett's bleak prognosis about Pales-

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ASSISTING FACULTY PURSUING FULBRIGHT OPPORTUNITIES

By Daniel Kelly

UB has a longstanding commitment to international scholarship and partnerships, and one of the most significant ways the university has carried out this commitment has been through the Fulbright Scholar Program.

For more than three-quarters of a century, this federally funded program has provided merit-based awards to scholars to foster understanding between the U.S. and other countries.

Today, the program issues over 400 awards each year to more than 135 countries for U.S. citizens to teach, conduct

about relationships — not only the relationships one forms during travel and potentially grow into lasting collaborations,” Baumstark says, “but also the relationships that are developed throughout the process of learning about the opportunities that exist and envisioning one’s own contributions to the Fulbright mission at home and abroad.”

Diana Aga, SUNY Distinguished Professor and Henry M. Woodburn Professor in the Department of Chemistry, was a Fulbright scholar in Portugal and the Philippines. She calls the experience “... one that expanded both my scientific horizons and my global network.”

“The award fostered collaborations that led to valuable publications in new areas of research, while also creating lasting friendships that continue to enrich my personal and professional life,” Aga says.

“I genuinely cannot say which outcome I treasure more — the exciting new research directions or the enduring personal connections — as both have become integral to my journey.”

The Fulbright experience continues to echo for Aga, as she not only maintains her valued relationships but also sees the enrichment of UB via the connections she has forged.

“My fellowship took place in 2022, and just two weeks ago, I had the pleasure of reuniting in Portugal with my host and collaborator — now lifelong friends,” she says.

“The impact of my time in the Philippines has also endured: a graduate student from my collaborator’s lab at the University of the Philippines is now pursuing a PhD under my supervision at the University at Buffalo.

“These ongoing relationships exemplify the enduring and far-reaching impact of the Fulbright experience.”

Similarly, Daniel B. Hess, professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, found the Fulbright experience to be a seminal moment in the trajectory of his career.

“My Fulbright Scholar Award was an important career achievement in itself, and then I was able to leverage the Fulbright award to help me win a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Award (funded by the European Commission), which supported more in-country time for deepening my research and broadening my publications,” Hess explains.

“The Fulbright Scholar Award came along at exactly the right moment in my career, since I was looking for opportunities to engage my research more globally.

“My Fulbright experience delivered abundantly in establishing international networks that facilitated publications and grant opportunities for me ... This helped elevate my scholarly profile.”

His Fulbright experiences continued to impact his work once he was back at UB, Hess notes. “I returned from my



Daniel Hess in Tallinn, Estonia during his Fulbright grant

research and carry out professional projects.

In recent years, UB has increased its efforts to inform and prepare faculty to successfully apply to this prestigious program. The Office of Faculty Affairs is hosting a networking event on Thursday for faculty interested in the Fulbright U.S. Scholar and Specialist programs, as well as Fulbright alumni who have received these awards in the past.

The purpose of the November 20 event was to enable those interested in the program to connect casually with colleagues and visiting Fulbright scholars, share experiences abroad and explore possible project ideas.

In this way, potential applicants can learn through conversations with Fulbright recipients about how they identified a suitable host country, developed a compelling application and planned and prepared for their time away from UB.

Tilman Baumstark, associate vice provost for faculty affairs and Fulbright scholar liaison, notes the importance of connecting with others in the Fulbright application process.

“In many ways, the spirit of the Fulbright program is

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SIX UB FACULTY RECEIVE FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR AWARDS

By Charles Anzalone

UB faculty members Shermali Gunawardena, Barbara Prinari, Bina Ramamurthy, Adrian Rodriguez-Riccelli, Hua "Helen" Wang and Hao Zeng have received prestigious Fulbright Scholar awards to study and teach abroad during the coming year.

The Fulbright program, coordinated by the U.S. Department of State, is devoted to improving intercultural relations, diplomacy and competence between the people of the U.S. and other nations through educational exchange.

The Office of Faculty Affairs supports applicants to the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program. UB faculty interested in learning more about the program can contact Maria Almanza, director of faculty recognition, or Tilman Baumstark, UB Fulbright liaison and associate vice provost for faculty affairs. This year's awardees are the following:

Shermali Gunawardena, associate professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, will travel to Sri Lanka to examine how meditation benefits patients with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. She will be affiliated with the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Colombo, and will be conducting research, teaching and student mentoring activities at the university's Centre for Meditation Research.

Gunawardena studies how proteins involved in three neurodegenerative diseases — Alzheimer's, Huntington's and Parkinson's — travel great distances along microtubule tracks within neurons to maintain cell viability. Her overall goal is to identify targets/pathways that can be developed for therapeutics. She hopes to identify these pathways early before disease pathology starts, since disease mutations in these proteins disrupt this long-distance transport pathway before neuronal death and neuropathology.

Her research group has found that many of these disease-related proteins can normally function in the maintenance of neuronal homeostasis, sending and receiving messages, and neuron protection. With this same premise, her work in Sri Lanka will focus on assessing the cellular and molecular responses after a controlled meditative regime in patients with early dementia. The Centre for Meditation Research has already examined how meditation can influence neurophysiological parameters in meditators compared to nonmeditators, and has expanded its studies to epilepsy.

Gunawardena's long-term goal for her Fulbright award is to establish a collaborative research program that fosters student exchange, which will benefit the global dementia/aging population through a noninvasive, nonpharmacological treatment strategy that consider every aspect of the body.

Barbara Prinari, professor in the Department of Mathematics, will travel to Greece to study wave phenomena. The main goal of the collaborative research

that Prinari will carry out at the University of Ioannina will be to develop a rigorous direct perturbation theory for the study of dark-bright solitons under physically relevant perturbations (e.g., dissipation, linear and nonlinear loss).

Prinari's research examines how these wave phenomena, by means of mathematical models, often lead to a certain class of nonlinear partial differential equations referred to as integrable systems. Her main area of research deals with nonlinear waves and integrable systems, and has focused on both the study of the integrability of certain nonlinear partial differential equations and their discretizations (differential-difference equations), as well as the properties of these equations and their solutions.

Prinari's research has also explored how mathematical models can be used for social and behavioral sciences. Her team has applied generalized kinetic methods and artificial neural networks to analyze and control the quality of an existing neuropsychiatric ward. She recently developed a dynamical systems model for triadic reciprocal determinism to study how a person experiences stress or traumatic events, and the interplay among coping self-efficacy, behavior and the perception of external environment.

Bina Ramamurthy, a professor of teaching in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, will spend a semester in Austria as a visiting professor at St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, teaching and conducting research on blockchain-based systems.

Ramamurthy is an expert on blockchain, cryptocurrency, digital assets, tokenization of assets and data-intensive computing. As the director of UB's Blockchain ThinkLab, she has worked extensively on these emerging technologies. She has developed a successful series of massive open online courses on blockchain technology that has reached thousands of global learners. She is the author of "Blockchain in Action," which introduces fundamental blockchain principles and teaches users to build blockchain-based decentralized applications.

Her most recent work includes a series of online courses focused on decentralized finance. She also teaches a course on the subject, and has an upcoming book titled "Blockchain, Cryptocurrency, and Decentralized Finance Systems: Concepts and Applications."

Adrian Rodriguez-Riccelli, assistant professor of Spanish, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, will teach and conduct research in linguistics in the Republic of Cabo Verde for the 2025-26 academic year.

Rodriguez-Riccelli's research and teaching combine quantitative variationist-sociolinguistic methods with insights from cognitive linguistics, language typology and formal syntax to analyze discourse and morphosyntactic variation in vernaculars of Spanish and Portuguese spoken in Africa and the Americas. These include the Portuguese-based Creole language Cabo-Verdean Creole, Spanish in

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FULBRIGHT SUPPORT

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Fulbright experiences with knowledge about how urban planning is applied in fast-changing contexts of Eastern Europe, and it was easy to apply new insights into my on-going projects in the U.S., focusing on challenges facing local communities but with an enhanced global gaze."

As a past Fulbright Award recipient, Hess says he's glad to see the evolution of the university's efforts to prepare scholars for this opportunity. "UB now offers a firm foundation of support for members of the UB community interested in applying for Fulbright grants," he says. "The available workshops, mentoring and coaching are excellent. These opportunities capitalize on the expertise of UB's deep bench of past Fulbright winners."

Faculty Affairs' networking event, which was part of the university's International Education Week activities, kicked off UB's next annual cycle of intensive preparation for Fulbright applicants. "The goal was for us to facilitate early conversations and spur interest in the program, via this event, while then being able to follow up in the spring with more intensive webinars and workshops," says Maria Almanza, director of faculty recognition.

Faculty Affairs plans to host a series of workshops from February through April to help participants fully explore award opportunities, learn more about the application process and subsequent participation in the program, and ultimately prepare a strong application. All of this builds toward next August, when applicants will be paired with Fulbright alumni in preparation for the anticipated mid-September submission deadline. ♦

FULBRIGHT AWARDEES

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the United States and, as a heritage language, Afro-Hispanic varieties and Spanish in dialectological perspective.

His work models the linguistic, cognitive and social factors that come together to shape patterns of variation in the relationships between linguistic form, function and meaning in these languages, and how their structure has changed and continues to change over time.

In his first semester at the Universidade de Cabo Verde, he will teach five-week modules of linguistics courses in the Cabo-Verdean studies major. In the second half of the award period, he will travel with a research team to six islands of the archipelago to collect sociolinguistic interviews, a picture-based descriptive narrative of a series of unannotated drawings representing the fairytale Lobu ku Xibinhu (The Wolf and the Sheep), oral histories, folk knowledge, folk tales and other examples of traditional Cabo-Verdean cultural and linguistic expression.

His team will work to develop print and digital audio/visual resources that simultaneously document and celebrate Cabo-Verdean folk knowledge, skills and individual and community histories, as well as traditional forms of Kriolu linguistic and cultural expression, all to enhance the capabilities of Cabo-Verdeans — especially those who may be elderly, live in rural areas or have lower educational attainment — to communicate with governmental, nongovernmental and multinational organizations, as well as with family in the diaspora.

Hua "Helen" Wang, professor in the Department of Communication, will travel to Norway to study the feasibility of using MetaHumans as storytelling agents to promote environmental sustainability and climate action. MetaHumans are highly realistic, interactive and artistic digital representations of human-like entities. They can be custom-made and enhanced by artificial intelligence. Wang

will explore research questions regarding the functional, relational and metaphysical aspects of this innovation.

Wang's projects often take the form of interdisciplinary collaborations to design, implement and evaluate public campaigns and health interventions. Her work leverages innovative strategies through narrative engagement, emerging technologies and communication networks to better serve disadvantaged communities and promote the well-being of individuals, groups and society at large.

As an entertainment-education expert, Wang has worked with award-winning Hollywood and Bollywood production teams, social-impact game designers and computer and data scientists affiliated with the AI for Good initiative. Her research has addressed complex issues in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence and climate change. In 2024, Wang co-edited the open access book "Storytelling to Accelerate Climate Solutions."

Hao Zeng, Moti Lal Rustgi Professor in the Department of Physics, will conduct research on chalcogenide perovskite thin films in Japan in collaboration with materials scientist Hideo Hosono. Zeng's work explores how new physical behaviors originate when dimensions of materials approach fundamental quantum length scales. His research spans 2D thin films, 1D nanowires and 0D nanocrystals, with a focus on understanding spin and magnetic interactions at the nanoscale.

Zeng's research team synthesizes these materials using both chemical solution-phase methods and vapor deposition techniques. Current research topics include magnetism in atomically thin layers and emergent phenomena that arise when they are interfaced with other materials, such as 2D semiconductors, to form heterostructures.

Zeng's group also develops advanced semiconductor materials for electronic and optoelectronic applications. A major focus is on chalcogenide perovskites, the novel class of ionic semiconductors that he will study in Japan with support from the Fulbright award. ♦

UB AGAIN DOES WELL IN STUDENT FULBRIGHT COMPETITION

By Charles Anzalone

Six UB students have won Fulbright awards, the prestigious national scholarship competition for grants to study, research and teach abroad.

"It is always exciting for UB to win Fulbright Awards," says Patrick McDevitt, Fulbright program adviser, associate professor of history and a 1993 Fulbright grantee to New Zealand.

"Congratulations to our winners. The Fulbright program exemplifies America's finest tradition of global engagement, benefiting awardees, their host nations and the United States as a whole."

McDevitt says UB is proud to have a long history of contributing to the Fulbright program by sending some of the university's brightest graduates overseas to represent the university and the nation.

Students who win these awards often have "life-changing experiences," says McDevitt, who also serves as associate dean of undergraduate education and the University Honors College, "and build relationships that will stay with them for the remainder of their lives."

"It's an honor to play a small role in this program. We're actively recruiting for the next cycle; rising seniors, alumni and graduate students are especially encouraged to contact us today and apply."

McDevitt says UB submitted 22 applications, nine of which were recommended to the national committees. Besides the six winners, two others were named alternates.

McDevitt also recognized the pivotal support and contributions from UB's Office of Fellowships and Scholarships, citing in particular director Megan Stewart.

The six student Fulbright winners:

James Falzone. A doctoral student in music composition, Falzone won a research grant to study in Austria. His project title is "Composition for Organ in an Ensemble Context with Study of Tuning and Temperament." Falzone is realizing his dream to study with Austrian composer and organist Klaus Lang, whose music Falzone said "moved him deeply" when he first heard it. He has since pursued a relationship with the Austrian musician, but the Fulbright will allow him to build upon this established rapport through "sustained study." Falzone's future plans are to pursue a career in academia.

Olivia Barth. A law and environmental sustainability student, Barth won an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) award to Taiwan. A member of the University Honors College, Barth has designed lessons for campers that engage nature with special attention to American and Native Americans culture. Barth aims to foster a sense of responsibility for the Taiwanese students' own conservation efforts, along with improving their English skills. Barth said her role

as an ETA will serve as a stepping stone toward becoming an environmental justice lawyer.

Laibah Mir. A philosophy, politics and engineering student, Mir won an English Teaching Assistant award to study in Jordan. A student in the Honors College, Mir received the Key into Public Service Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa Society, in 2023. She is devoted to cross-cultural understanding, holistic educational curricula and teaching styles that uplift underrepresented perspectives. Her work in Jordan will expand these interests by focusing on the diverse and often marginalized populations of the country, which hosts the second-largest number of refugees per capita in the world. Her future plans are to study Islamic studies at the Qalam Seminary, then attend law school.

Jaden Troiano. A biochemistry student, Troiano won an English Teaching Assistant award to Taiwan. An Honors College student, Troiano plans to attend medical school. He aims to research how media helps unite diverse populations through "shared aspects of the human experience and to empathize with experiences and struggles that may never have been encountered otherwise." Troiano aspires to be a superlative teacher, one who will encourage fun, engaging learning, cultural exchange and appreciation, and mental wellness, "a source of knowledge for students but also a source of support and compassion."

Constance Yap. A student in health and human services, Yap won an English Teaching Assistant award to the Canary Islands. A Presidential Scholar and Honors College student, Yap is especially interested in cultural exchange, whether it be local cuisine that has incorporated Latin American and African influences, or the carnival in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, or exploring the diverse natural landscapes of the islands. Yap plans to incorporate music to break through mental health stigmas and improve her students' confidence in communicating with their peers. Yap plans to enter medical school.

Taylor Smith. A linguistics and education major, Smith won an English Teaching Assistant award to South Korea. Smith has spent the past five years learning how to be an effective English language teacher and will use her knowledge of the nuances of Korean language to help give children a "conscious awareness" of the features of the English language they need to focus on. Her goal is to praise these students for their effort in a demanding academic environment, and also "make sure they find joy in learning." Smith's future plans are to teach English as a New Language (ELN) teacher.

Two UB students were named as alternates: **Ariel Ratne.** a Spanish/environmental geoscience student, who is an alternate for an English Teaching Assistant award to Spain; and **Nyia Meyers,** a linguistics student, is an alternate for an English Teaching Assistant award to South Korea. ♦

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF FACULTY AND STAFF

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Kelly Ahuna, director, was the Keynote Speaker for Enhancing Academic Integrity: From Ideas to Action Conference in Dublin, Ireland in September 2024. Her talk, “Life Lessons: Turning Academic Integrity Violations into Educational Opportunities,” shared UB’s homegrown remediation program to help prevent students with policy violations from future offenses.

Loretta Frankovitch, associate director, presented a workshop at the most recent international conference of the European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI) in Uppsala, Sweden. Her workshop focused on slowing students down to critically evaluate the usage of artificial intelligence and how speed does not aid the learning process.

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

Department of Architecture

Miguel Guitart, associate professor, coordinated the Study Abroad Architecture Program in Spain in the summer 2025, which Guitart has coordinated for 7 years. This six-week program offers architecture students a unique opportunity to experience the vibrant culture of this European country and visit first-hand some of its most remarkable architectural sites and buildings. Nine graduate and undergraduate students joined the summer 2025. With a base in Madrid, the program includes two seminars and a design studio that focus on design and drawing exercises. The studio is organized as a workshop where the students design a proposal for a UB cultural facility in Madrid, a hypothetical campus for student exchange and cultural programs. The group travels to major cities, including Toledo, El Escorial, Mérida, Lisbon, Granada, Córdoba, Sevilla, Cádiz, Bilbao, San Sebastián and Barcelona.

Department of Urban and Regional Planning

Daniel B. Hess, professor, gave a keynote lecture at the September 2025 annual meeting of the European Parking Association. He spoke about his new edited book, *The Shoup Doctrine: Essays Celebrating Donald Shoup and Parking Reforms*. He also published co-authored research, with Daniel Štraub of Jagiellonian University, in an article entitled “Re-examining fare-free public transport for greater inclusivity” in the international journal *Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. This research emanates from Hess’ 2023-2024 scholarly visit to Kraków Poland as a Fulbright Scholar.

Anahita Khodadadi, assistant professor, and **Yunjeong Chang**, associate professor in the Graduate School of Education, present their study titled: “Enhancing Learning in Structural Engineering for Architecture Students: Addressing Learning Barriers, Adaptive Strategies, and Equity Considerations” at the International Association of Shells and Spatial Structures (IASS) Annual Symposium, in Mexico City, Mexico, on October 28, 2025. Their study examines how adaptive instructional strategies can address key learning barriers—such as low math proficiency, pacing difficulties, and need for practical applications—faced by marginalized architecture students in structural engineering courses, revealing both improvements in learning experiences and persistent disparities among gender, first-generation, and neurodiverse groups. The IASS Annual Symposium is a premier global forum where researchers, engineers, and architects exchange cutting-edge knowledge on innovative structural systems, advancing the science, technology, and application of lightweight shells and spatial structures to shape sustainable and transformative built environments.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Arts Management Program

Katja Praznik, associate professor of Global Gender and Sexuality Studies, presented “Union-Busting in the Art Museum: The Invisibility of Artistic Labor and Counterstrategies of Cultural Workers” at the European Sociological Association’s Research Network 18 – Sociology of Communications and Media Research mid-term conference Communication and Capital(ism) at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, in August 2025. She delivered the keynote address “From Artwork to Art Work: A Double Entendre of Love, Labor and Value” at the 12th Annual Wollesen Memorial Graduate Symposium Do What You Love: Pleasure, Precarity, and Profit in Histories of Artistic Labour at the University of Toronto in October 2025,

and published a chapter, “Invisible Labor, Class Struggle and the Politics of Learned Helplessness,” in *Contemporary Art in the Post-Yugoslav Space: Case Studies in Hauntology*, edited by Jonathan Blackwood and Jasmina Tumbas (London: Routledge, 2026). She gave an online talk, “The Price of Autonomy: Labor, Disenfranchisement, and the Post-Socialist Shift,” for the International Conference After Industry: Work Hard, Pay Hard. Is There Political Democracy Without Economic Democracy? in Slovakia in October 2025, and will give a public lecture, “From Exploitation to Solidarity: Making Art Work Count,” for the series Towards Other Possible Artworlds at tranzit.sk in Bratislava in November 2025. She will also present “Are Artists Working People? Labor, Art, and the People in Yugoslav Socialism” at the 57th ASEES Annual Convention in Washington, D.C., and serve as a discussant for the roundtable Yugoslav Internationalisms I: Book Discussion: Yugoslavia, Nonalignment and Cold War Globalism at the same event.

Department of Classics

Alessandro Sebastiani, associate professor and chair, has completed the seventh archaeological excavation season at Monteverdi as part of the IMPERO Project. This four-week campaign focused on the vicus at Podere Cannicci, founded in the 3rd century BCE and destroyed during the Social Wars under Sulla in the 1st century BCE. The excavations revealed the extent of the administrative center and helped to reconstruct its topography. Students from several American universities participated in the project, which is co-directed by Prof. Todd Fenton (Michigan State University). In 2024, Prof. Sebastiani also published *Roma antica e l'ideologia nazionale italiana. Trasformazioni di una città dal Risorgimento al fascismo* with Carocci Editore and participated in a number of international conferences across America and Europe.

Department of Communicative Disorders and Sciences

Coordinated through **Ling-Yu Guo**, associate professor, and in collaboration with clinical faculty, the department has hosted for the third year Speech-Language Pathology/ Audiology undergraduate and graduate students from Asia University in Taiwan for a summer internship in 2025. The students visit for 5 weeks and are integrated into observations in the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Clinic, attend classes with graduate students, tour Buffalo with graduate students who volunteer to serve as Buffalo Ambassadors, and participate in a weekly Communication Class where they work on their own English Communication skills with our Graduate Clinician’s in training.

Department of Economics

Alex Anas, professor, presented his paper “The paradoxical comparative statics of hypercongestion and traffic flow theory” at the annual International Transportation Economics Association Conference held at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois during June 25 – 27, 2025.

Todd Pugatch, associate professor, was part of ongoing evaluations of international education interventions. He visited Malawi in October 2025 to observe two interventions to improve foundational literacy and numeracy in primary schools: 1) an evaluation of the National Numeracy Programme, a nationwide effort to strengthen the teaching of early-grade mathematics; and 2) the Building Education Foundations through Innovation & Technology (BEFIT) program, which provides tablets for personalized adaptive learning of reading and mathematics. He also submitted preliminary results of an early grade Arabic literacy intervention based on principles of cognitive science to implementing partners in the United Arab Emirates.

Department of Geography

Adam M. Wilson, associate professor, saw his international project BioScape (The Biodiversity Survey of the Cape) receive multiple accolades over the past year. The multinational research project, which Wilson co-led, received a Group Achievement Award as part of the 2024-25 NASA Honor Awards. The award is given to NASA-funded groups that substantially contribute to the agency’s mission, with the BioScape team recognized for its “outstanding achievements in advancing the understanding of ecosystem structure, function, and composition and their change over time”. BioScape was NASA’s first biodiversity-focused campaign and used aircraft with remote sensing technology combined with extensive

fieldwork to gather data in South Africa's Greater Cape Floristic Region, a global biodiversity hotspot. The project brought together a diverse team of 283 individuals, including students, engineers, pilots, and scientists. BioScape was also named a finalist for the 2024/2025 National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF)-South32 Awards in the Data for Research Award category. The NSTF Awards, referred to as the "Science Oscars of the South" are considered a great honor in South Africa, given the high quality of nominations and intense competition. The project was recognized for collecting Africa's largest airborne and ground biodiversity dataset, which advances the ability to measure, monitor, and understand global biodiversity through remote sensing. Additionally, Festus Adegbola, a PhD student in geography advised by Wilson, was awarded a Future Investigators in NASA Earth and Space Science and Technology (FINESST) Fellowship. This highly competitive fellowship supports graduate student research that aligns with NASA's Earth Science Division. Adegbola's research is part of the BioScape project and uses remote-sensing data from aircraft and satellites to model how plant traits and wildfire patterns influence bird diversity in South Africa's Greater Cape Floristic Region. The BioScape project is also the subject of a new documentary titled "The Spectrum of Life," which premiered at the 2025 Buffalo International Film Festival. The film, directed by South African filmmakers Otto Whitehead and Jeremy Shelton, places the team's scientific work into the broader context of the human experience and global conservation efforts.

Department of Global Gender and Sexuality Studies

Senay Imre, PhD candidate, was selected to represent both the department and the Federation of Women's Associations of Türkiye (TKDF) at the UN Second World Social Development Summit in Doha, Qatar in November 2025, where global leaders convened to shape the future of social protection and inclusive development. A unifying message emerged throughout the summit: sustainable and meaningful social progress is impossible without investing in women and girls; priorities include: preventing gender-based violence before it occurs; supporting women's rights organizations, especially those serving marginalized communities; closing the global gender gap in social protection; building equitable care systems that ensure fair wages and dignity for care workers; and centering women's rights and needs in conflict and crisis contexts. Senay was selected as the U.S. representative of TKDF in March 2025. TKDF, a leading umbrella organization founded in 1976 with more than 180 branches nationwide, plays a central role in advancing women's rights, economic empowerment, and gender equality in Türkiye. In this role, Imre contributes to national and global policy dialogues through advocacy, education, and strategic engagement across multiple sectors.

Department of Mathematics

Adam Sikora, professor, is helping advance and popularize the growing field of quantum topology, which connects topology and geometry with quantum physics through surprising cross-fertilization of ideas. He co-organized three international conferences and a summer school devoted to this area. The first three NSF-supported events were held at the Vietnam Institute for Advanced Study in Mathematics in Hanoi in June 2025 and at the Centre International de Rencontres Mathématiques (CIRM) in Marseille, France in July 2025. Another meeting, exploring connections with Number Theory, will take place at the Mathematisches Forschungsinstitut Oberwolfach in Germany in late April 2026.

Department of Media Study

Laura Kraning, assistant professor, has had numerous international screenings of her films since April 2025, including International Short Film Festival Oberhausen in Germany, Istanbul Experimental Film Festival in Turkey, and VideoEx Festival in Switzerland. In September 2025 her films screened at Ibrida Festival of Intermedial Arts in Italy, Emami Art Experimental Film Festival in India, and Filmfest Aachen in Germany. In November 2025, she had a film screening at the London International Animation Festival and a retrospective film screening of eight of her short films at Visions in Montreal, Canada, followed by a second evening shorts program titled "Scape Time Space Lapse," which Kraning was invited to curate.

Department of Political Science

Timothy Hellwig, professor, delivered three invited presentations in Seoul, South Korea in October 2025. At Sungkyunkwan University he gave presentations entitled "Boon or Bust? Elite Conflict and Approval Rallies in Times of Crisis" and "Journal Publishing in Political Science." At

Yonsei University he presented his research on "When do Women Influence Policy?"

Carla Martinez Machain, professor, served as the Program Chair for the joint International Studies Association/Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Internacionales research conference in Huatulco, Oaxaca (Mexico) in June 2025. Martinez Machain's role involved putting together the conference program as well as speaking on roundtables and presenting research.

Department of Romance Languages and Literatures

David R Castillo, professor of Spanish and co-director of the Center for Information Integrity, gave a talk titled "Lessons on Reality from the Spanish Master of Fiction: Reading Cervantes in Our Age of Conspiratorial Illusions" at the Congreso Internacional ALDEEU, University of Salamanca in Salamanca, Spain in July 2025.

Marco Faini, assistant professor of Italian, taught a lesson on "Casi, dubbi, probabilità: pensare l'incertezza col rinascimento," at the *International Summer School Rinascenti. Percorsi e didattica tra reti intellettuali e comunità di idee nei secoli XIV-XVII*, University of Turin, Italy, in July 2025. He gave a talk on "Il Conte Ugolino di Giovan Leone Sempronio da Dante alla ragion di stato," at the conference *Riscritture dantesche*, University of Turin, Italy on September 23, 2025. He also gave a talk on "Inquietudini e dubbi di Pietro Bembo tra Roma, Padova e Venezia," at the conference *Bembo a Roma*, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, Rome, Italy, on September 24, 2025.

Paola Ugolini, associate professor, participated in a conference at the Sapienza University of Rome titled "Guerriero in Dialogo: Immagini e rappresentazioni delle donne in armi tra storia, arti e letterature" in June 2025.

Department of Sociology and Criminology

Sampson Lee Blair, associate professor, published *The Retreat from Marriage and Parenthood: Examining the Causes and Consequences of Declining Rates*, with Zheng Mu (Fudan University, China). The book (2025) examines declining rates of marriage and childbearing around the globe. In collaboration with Louie Benedict R. Ignacio (University of Santo Tomas, Philippines); Veronica L. Gregorio (National University of Singapore), and Clarence M. Batan (Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Manila), he published *Blood Ties and Politics: The Influence of Political Polarization upon Family Life*. This book (2025) examines how polarization of politics has impacted family relationships around the world. In collaboration with Josip Obradović (Catholic University of Croatia), he has two forthcoming (2025) books. The first, *Families and Migration: Examining the Causes, Processes, and Consequences of Migration*, examines how international migration flows affect families. The second, *Families and Migration: Examining the Human Meaning of Migration*, focuses upon how migration impacts the nature of family relationships. In collaboration with Timothy J. Madigan (Commonwealth University, Pennsylvania) and Fang Fang (Old Dominion University, Virginia), he recently published *Sociology of China: An Introduction*. This book (2025) examines the cultural history of China and how its institutions have changed over recent decades. He and Radhamany Sooryamoorthy (University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa) have a book forthcoming in December of 2025, *Sex and Sexuality within the Family Context*. This book examines the complicated manners in which sex, sexuality identity, and sexuality are grounded within family life. In collaboration with Timothy J. Madigan and Sha Luo (University of Wisconsin, Madison), he published "Declining Aspirations for Marriage and Parenthood among Young Women and Men in China" in *Family Sciences* (2025). Blair, Madigan, and Luo also collaborated in a research paper presentation at the 2025 International Sociological Association conference in Rabat, Morocco. Their paper, entitled "Marriage and Fertility Aspirations in Post-Pandemic China: Changes in the Preferences of Young Adults," examines changes in marriage and childbearing aspirations in the pre- and post-Covid eras. Blair and Luo also presented "Adolescent Substance Use and Self-Efficacy: The Role of Risk-Taking in Aspirations for their Future Roles," at the ISA conference in Rabat. At the ISA conference, Blair also served as organizer of two conference sessions, and as discussant at another. Along with Timothy J. Madigan and Fang Fang, he presented "A Bit Unsure about Gender Equality?: Gender Expectations among Chinese and American Young Adults" at the recent American Sociological Conference in Chicago. With Louie R. Benedict Ignacio and Clarence M. Batan, he will be presenting "Dating and the Initiation of Intimate Behaviors among

Young Adults in the Philippines” at the 2025 Philippine Sociological Society conference in Davao, Philippines. Finally, he received the Outstanding Educator Award from the University of Santo Tomas, in the Philippines.

SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE

Department of Oral Biology

Three faculty members in the department were recognized among a cadre of top researchers at the 2025 International Association for Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research (IADR) General Session and Exhibition held in late June in Barcelona, Spain. More than 4,600 scientists and others representing 96 countries attended. **Patricia Diaz**, Sunstar Robert J. Genco Endowed Chair and Empire Innovation Professor, received the 2025 IADR Distinguished Scientist Research in Oral Biology Award for her extensive research of the oral microbiome. Diaz’s laboratory was one of the first to apply high throughput DNA sequencing to characterize the oral microbiome communities in homeostasis and disease. In addition, Diaz served as co-principal investigator in 2022 for two projects funded by \$7.8 million in grants from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. In conjunction with Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, she has explored the influence of the oral microbiome on both the risk of developing oral thrush during cancer treatment and the risk of infection with cancer-linked human papillomavirus (HPV) among people with HIV.

Hyuk-Jae “Edward” Kwon, associate professor, received second place in the 2025 IADR Joseph Lister Award for New Investigators for his study of how the gene KMT2D affects the development of tooth enamel. The IADR Joseph Lister Award for New Investigators, sponsored by Kenvue, is named for the 19th century British surgeon who pioneered antiseptic medicine and recognizes researchers within their first 10 years of academic appointment. To better understand how the KMT2D gene works, Kwon and his research team genetically engineered mice with the gene turned off in the cells that form enamel. They discovered that the mice’s teeth were very similar to human patients with Kabuki syndrome: rough, chalky and thinner than normal. Kabuki syndrome is characterized by distinct facial features, intellectual disabilities and dental anomalies — including weakened enamel.

Jung-Mi Lee, research assistant professor, was invited to present her research at the 2025 15th Tooth Morphogenesis & Differentiation Conference, held June 29 – July 4 in Corfu, Greece. She delivered an oral presentation on her study of tooth enamel development, highlighting her significant contributions to dental and craniofacial research. Lee’s research on enamel development was recently published in the *Journal of Dental Research* (JDR), the flagship journal of the International Association for Dental Research (IADR). The study, co-corresponded by **Hyuk-Jae Edward Kwon**, reflects UB researchers’ ongoing excellence in advancing craniofacial and dental science on a global scale.

Stefan Ruhl, professor and chair, oversaw the return visit of two faculty members from Riga Stradiņš University in Latvia in October 2025 as part of the dental school’s faculty exchange program. During their stay, the visiting faculty performed laboratory experiments, acquired research-relevant academic skills, and observed clinical procedures. The partnership with Riga Stradiņš University, which launched in 2023, encourages exchanges of faculty and students and creates opportunities to develop joint research projects. The program has been made possible by a donation from **Mirdza Neiders**, professor emeritus in the Department of Oral Diagnostic Sciences.

Frank Scannapieco, SUNY Distinguished Professor, received the 2025 IADR Distinguished Scientist Award in Geriatric Oral Research for his research in and advocacy for the dental health of older adults. Over his more than 30 years at UB, Scannapieco, a periodontist and microbiologist, has conducted extensive research on the interactions between saliva and bacteria, the relationships between oral and systematic disease, and the health needs of older adults. Scannapieco has studied the role of oral microbes and periodontal disease in common medical problems, such as pneumonia, diabetes and cancer. He is involved with the Coalition for Oral Health Policy, which aims to expand oral health care for older adults. With this group and separately, Scannapieco has advocated for Medicare to cover dental care and thus improve health outcomes for people age 65 and older. In 2025, Scannapieco also traveled to Bucharest Romania, where he was awarded the title of *Doctor Honoris Causa* from the Car-

ol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy. The honorary title pays tribute to “a globally recognized expert and true friend of the academic community.” Since 2010, Scannapieco has had constant scientific collaboration with members of the Bucharest-based university’s academic community. He is the author and co-author of over 190 scientific papers and book chapters, with publications addressing basic studies of oral biofilm formation to the connection between periodontal diseases and systemic diseases.

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology

Sunha Kim, associate professor and director of the Educational Data Science (EDS) Program, jointly organized and hosted with **Nojin Kwak**, professor of communication and vice provost for international education, *The 4th Annual Korean Studies Symposium: International Symposium—AI and Data Science in Education: Insights from South Korea*. Held on September 26–27, 2025, at the National AI Institute for Exceptional Education on the UB North Campus, the symposium featured Jo Boaler, Nomellini and Olivier Professor at Stanford University, as the keynote speaker. The event brought together more than 20 researchers from South Korea, England, India, and across the United States—including representatives from Seoul National University, the University of Pennsylvania, the Georgia Department of Education, and the University of Texas at Austin—along with GSE leadership and community members such as the dean, associate deans, department chairs, the director of the UB Institute for Learning Sciences, faculty members, alumni, and students. Kim has published multiple conference proceedings in international venues. Her research includes the roles of digital competency and digital training in promoting minority professionals’ retention (Kim, Linch, Ding, & VanScoy), gender responsiveness in using ICTs for online learning during the COVID-19 era (Kim, Rosenblith, Linch, & Reynolds), and the impact of DEI initiatives on librarian retention through a moderated mediation SEM model (Kim, VanScoy, Ding, & Crabtree). She has also contributed to meta-analytic research on the role of the L2 motivational self-system in second language learning (Kim, H., Jeong, Brutt-Griffler, & Kim). Several of these publications are tied to funded grant activities, including IMLS-supported projects.

Department of Information Science

Africa S. Hands, assistant professor, was invited to present at the inaugural Australasian Public Library Conference. She presented “The Community’s Swiss Army Knife: On the Nimbleness of Public Libraries” online via Zoom. Over the summer, Dr. Hands presented the papers “The relevance of “classic” information behavior theories to contemporary reference service” (with Dr. Amy VanScoy, Information Science) and “Disrupting job uncertainty with graduate-level career services” at the Libraries in the Digital Age Conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia. In Slovenia, she engaged in research with collaborators at the University of Ljubljana. She presented a poster entitled “Information seeking behavior during the college admissions process: A preliminary analysis” at the 12th International Conference on Conceptions of Library and Information Science hosted by the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, UK.

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCES

Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering

In June 2025 **Paschalis Alexandridis**, UB Distinguished Professor, delivered a Keynote Lecture on “Unlocking Value from Plastic Waste with Advanced Sorting and Molecular Recycling” at the 12th International Conference on Sustainable Solid Waste Management held in Paphos, Cyprus, and a Keynote Lecture on “Ploxamer Self-Assembly Modulated by Solvents” at the Formula XII Formulation Conference held in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Amit Goyal, SUNY Distinguished Professor and Empire Innovation Professor, has been elected a Foreign Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences, India, a prestigious honor recognizing his seminal contributions to the field of applied superconductivity. Established in 1930, the National Academy of Sciences, India, is the oldest science academy of India. Its membership includes scientists, engineers and health professionals. In an announcement in October, the Academy named him one of eight Foreign Fellows in 2025. Foreign Fellows are renowned for their scientific contributions and have contributed to the progress of science in India. The Academy recognized Goyal’s contributions in developing high-performance, single crystal-like, high-temperature superconductor (HTS) wires that are being advanced for large-scale applications, in particular, for the

electric power industry. The potentially transformative, commercial nuclear fusion application via magnetic confinement is both an enabling and a niche application of HTS wires. He has mentored many Indian nationals as graduate students and postdoctoral fellows; currently, he mentors two postdoctoral fellows and one graduate student who are from India. Additionally, he has hosted many Indian colleagues both at UB and at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where he is an emeritus corporate fellow. In 2014, he led a \$50 million U.S.-India proposal from Oak Ridge National Laboratory as part of the PACE-R (Partnership to Advance Clean Energy Research) U.S.-India initiative to accelerate clean energy research and development. The proposal was a collaboration between 10 leading institutions in India and 10 in the U.S. including academia, industry and national laboratories.

Department of Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering

Cemalettin Basaran, professor, gave a keynote lecture at the XVIII International Conference on Computational Plasticity, September 3, 2025, in Barcelona, Spain, on the Unified Mechanics Theory.

Department of Materials Design and Innovation

Jiayu Peng, assistant professor, delivered invited seminar lectures at the Advanced Institute for Materials Research of Tohoku University in Japan, the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, and the University of Toronto in Canada during the summer of 2025. He also traveled to those countries to give invited and contributed talks at the Applied Materials & Interfaces Conference (AMIC 2025), the AI4X 2025 Conference, and the Acceleration Consortium's Accelerate 2025 Conference, where he presented his group's past and ongoing research on AI/ML-driven materials design and discovery and met with international collaborators.

Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Deborah Chung, SUNY Distinguished Professor, received Caltech's Distinguished Alumni Award of 2025 on Oct. 18, 2025. She is one of four alumni honored in 2025. On July 31, 2025, Chung gave an invited keynote lecture on "From war to peace: my father Leslie Wah-Leung Chung" for the St. Mark's School Alumni Association in Toronto, Canada. St. Mark's School is a top secondary school in Hong Kong, founded by Chung's father in 1949. During the period Sept. 29, 2025 - Oct. 1, 2025, Chung delivered ten oral papers in person at the Materials Science and Technology 2025 conference, held in Columbus, Ohio. The titles of the papers are (a) Extraordinary inductive and capacitive discharge/charge behavior of carbon fiber, and the enabled nonstop discharge of a fiber assembly, (b) Coil-less carbon fiber composites for structural inductors – a new functionality for smart structures, (c) New permittivity-based and inductance-based functionalities for 3D-printed polymer-based materials, (d) Electrical 3D-printing process monitoring methods, (e) Apparent impedance amplification for material self-sensing, (f) My 50-Year journey in science and engineering, (g) Inductance of stranded metal wires stemming from contacts among the strands, (h) Inductance-dominant impedance discovered in polymer electrolyte, (i) Improving the electromagnetic interference shielding performance of exfoliated-graphite-based flexible graphite sheet by engineering a monotonic density gradient along the thickness of the sheet, and (j) Polarization behavior of electrical conductors and its dependence on the microstructure. On Oct. 15, 2025, Chung gave an invited keynote lecture for the company Henkel, with the virtual participation of Henkel's global staff, as part of its Scientific Symposium of Adhesive Technologies. The lecture was given in person in Detroit, Michigan, on "Thermal interface materials for improving thermal contacts." Chung co-authored a peer-reviewed research journal publication in collaboration with Murat Ozturk of Bursa Uludag University in Türkiye: "Drying-participating water and drying-induced air voids in the post-curing drying of cement-based material" in *Transport in Porous Media*, in press, 2025.

Tarunraj Singh, professor, served as an opponent in the Ph.D. dissertation defense in March 2025, of Tarek Diaa-Eldeen. Mr. Diaa-Eldeen successfully defended his PhD thesis "Improved Closed-Loop Reservoir Management (CLRM). System-Theoretic Approaches" at the @Department of Engineering Cybernetics at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway.

SCHOOL OF LAW

Kim Diana Connolly, professor, vice dean for interdisciplinarity, innovation, and community impact, and director of the Environmental Advocacy

Clinic, participated in the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe in July 2025. Connolly was at COP15 in multiple roles: an international wetlands policy scholar, a clinical legal education professor, and co-chair of the World Wetland Network (WWN). As WWN co-chair, she helped convene global civil-society and non-profits to advance wetlands conservation, ecological justice, and community-based governance initiatives. She presented interventions on behalf of WWN and its members and supported the work of the international Youth Engaged in Wetlands organization. Connolly also was there to continue her scholarly work on the Convention on Wetlands, observing directly governance issues presented at both COP14 and COP15 regarding historic votes in a typically consensus-based international treaty space. Following COP15, UB Law's Environmental Advocacy Clinic (EAC) began a collaboration with the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Organization (ZELO). The work is focused on supporting new wetlands protections for that country and assessing Zimbabwe's constitutional right to "an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being, and to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations" (Constitution of Zimbabwe, § 73). Connolly and EAC clinic student attorneys are supporting ZELO's efforts through legal research, policy analysis, and student-led advocacy addressing wetlands and broader environmental-governance issues.

Meredith Kolsky Lewis, professor and vice dean for international and graduate programs, delivered a public lecture, "Unpacking the First 100 days of President Trump 2.0: The Legalities of US Unilateral Trade Measures," at the Victoria University of Wellington Law School in New Zealand in May 2025. At the Society of International Economic Law Biennial Conference in Taipei, Taiwan in July 2025 Lewis participated as a roundtable speaker on the topic "Navigating International Economic Law Academic Careers in a Changing World: Insights, Perspectives and Ideas" and as a panelist presenting on "Leading from the Bottom Up: New Zealand as a Common Denominator in Shaping Rules for Inclusive and Sustainable Trade." She has been interviewed by several media outlets this year to discuss aspects of the Trump Administration's tariffs, including PolitiFact, Louisville Public Media and the Hamilton, Ontario television station CHCH, and has contributed posts regarding the same to Newsroom (New Zealand) and the International Economic Law and Policy blog.

Paul Linden-Retek, associate professor, in the summer and early fall of 2025 presented his recent monograph on constitutional theory and European integration, *Postnational Constitutionalism: Europe and the Time of Law*, at Lund University, Sweden, and the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence; participated in workshops on "Immanent Critique and EU Law" and "Is this Europe? Conceptualising the Everyday in European Law" at the EUI; and presented the forthcoming volume, *Critical Theory and European Union Law: The Question of Postnational Emancipation*, co-edited with Päivi Neuvonen of Durham University (UK), at the European Law Unbound Society (ELU-S) inaugural conference at the Faculty of Law, Charles University, Prague.

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Department of Accounting and Law

Michael Dambra, associate professor of accounting and Kenneth W. Colwell Chair of Accounting and Law, was an invited speaker to University of Melbourne's campus in Melbourne, Australia, in May 2025. He presented his paper titled "From Restatement Risk to Reporting Rigor: Evidence from the SEC's Clawback Mandate" and met with faculty and Ph.D. students from the University of Melbourne following his presentation. His paper studies the economic consequences of a new rule from the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission requiring all firms listed on major stock exchanges to have a written policy in place to recover compensation awarded to executive officers in the event of an accounting restatement. He also served as the Beedie Family Visiting Fellow in 2025, and delivered two lectures at Simon Fraser University at two separate visits to Vancouver, Canada.

JACOBS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Department of Medicine

Jessy Alexander, research professor, attended the International Complement Workshop in Brisbane, Australia, September 14-19 2025, at which she was elected a counselor at the meeting for 2025-2027. At the meeting she co-chaired the session on "Complement and Disease", co-chaired the "Firing sessions," and gave a talk.

Department of Structural Biology

Alex J. Vecchio, assistant professor, was part of an international group that published new research in the field of protein design using in silico artificial intelligence and machine learning in the journal *Nature*. The paper, “One-shot design of functional protein binders with BindCraft”, was done in collaboration with researchers at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Lausanne, Switzerland and included other researchers at universities in Geneva and Zurich, Switzerland, as well as Wageningen University in the Netherlands. This work provides open access to state-of-the-art computational tools to design novel proteins that have potential as new therapeutics.

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS*Department of Biostatistics*

Marianthi Markatou, SUNY Distinguished Professor and associate chair of research and health care informatics, has received the ISI Service Award from the International Statistical Institute (ISI). The ISI is the leading independent organization for the promotion and advancement of statistical science worldwide. The award, presented every two years by the ISI Executive Committee, recognizes members of the ISI for outstanding contributions to the institute and the global statistical community. The award honors Markatou's leadership, dedication to the ISI and the statistical community, as well as her pivotal role as co-editor-in-chief of the *International Statistical Review*. Markatou is a nationally and internationally recognized researcher with a distinguished body of work that has advanced the fields of statistical science — statistics and biostatistics — and data science. She is an elected fellow of both the Institute of Mathematical Statistics and the American Statistical Association, as well as an elected member of the ISI.

Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health

Kasia Kordas, associate professor, participated in a technical meeting on “Opportunities for use of nuclear techniques to build evidence on food contaminants, food safety and human nutrition inter-linkages” convened at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, Austria on July 8-10. Kordas was also featured, among other colleagues, in a podcast recorded for the Nuclear in Nutrition Interview Series (NNIS) at the IAEA to discuss how environmental exposures intersect with food and nutrition, and how nuclear techniques could be used to understand the connections between food-borne hazards, nutrition, and health.

Joshua D. Miller, assistant professor, participated in the launch of the FoodWISE Asia Pacific network, held 17–19 September 2025 in Sydney, Australia. The event convened researchers, policymakers, development partners, and community leaders from 15 countries to advance the use of experiential tools that assess whether people can reliably acquire and benefit from food and water, with the goal of promoting equitable access to these essential resources. Miller also presented on the Institutional Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Insecurity Experiences Scale Development Project, a global initiative he leads with partners from other universities, NGOs, and international agencies. The project aims to develop and validate tools that comparably assess whether WASH services in schools and healthcare facilities meet the needs of students, patients, and staff. In 2025, data collection was completed in Uganda, Ethiopia, Nepal, Rwanda, and Peru, with additional surveying underway in Ghana, Mozambique, Malawi, and Kenya. The project is expanding and actively seeking partners to pilot the tools in new contexts, including within the United States.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Enoch Azasu, assistant professor, presented the invited presentation *Suicide in the African diaspora* in September at the Trauma Informed Coalition of Cattaraugus County 2025 Trauma Symposium, at St. Bonaventure University, NY. He also published the paper (with colleagues) *Significance of Sociocultural Factors in Suicide Behavior: Testing a Socioculturally Inclusive Interpersonal Psychological Theory of Suicide Behavior Among Junior High School Students in Ghana* in the *Journal of Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*.

Susan A. Green, clinical professor, has been named to the Fulbright Specialist Roster for a three-year tenure. Part of the larger Fulbright program from the U.S. Department of State, the Fulbright Specialist program pairs highly qualified U.S. academics and professionals with host institutions abroad to share their expertise, strengthen international ties and help

host institutions build capacity. With her selection, Green can now be matched with short-term projects at institutions in more than 150 countries around the globe. An expert on trauma-informed care, Green is co-director of the school's Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care (ITTIC). She is principal investigator on multiple grant projects focused on implementing trauma-informed approaches in organizations and systems of care. In addition, Green is a contributing author and presenter for many peer-reviewed, trauma-related publications and presentations. ITTIC collaborates with agencies and organizations to provide training, consultation and coaching services on trauma and trauma-informed approaches. Founded in 2012, ITTIC also offers micro-credentials, continuing education modules and a free Trauma-Informed Organizational Change Manual, which has been downloaded more than 16,000 times since its release in 2019.

Denise Krause, clinical full professor, is a member of the conference planning committee for the Solution Focused Brief Therapy international conference and she will be attending that conference in November in Toronto: Moving Conversations: Advancing Solution-Focused Practice and Research (SFBTA2025).

JoAnn S. Lee, associate professor, and a global network of colleagues focused on youth aging out of care, the International Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood from Care (INTRAC), have this forthcoming international policy analysis comparing 4 countries (US, UK, Norway, and Australia): *Disabled youth transitioning from care: An international policy analysis in the Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*. Dr. Lee also presented *Intersectional disparities in placement volatility among care leavers with and without emotional disability in the U.S.* with colleagues at The European Scientific Association on Residential and Family Care for Children and Adolescents (EuSARF), Zagreb, Croatia

Laura Lewis, clinical associate professor, completed her Office of International Education funded project ((\$5,000), *Pedagogical approaches supporting social equity and inclusion in social work education: A comparative study of the US and Costa Rican contexts* and returned from her administrative leave project in Costa Rica in May, finishing her project *Advancing Global and Critical Social Work Education through International Engagement in Costa Rica*. Dr. Lewis is currently working on an online curriculum resource, *Decolonizing International Social Work*, in collaboration with the Council on Social Work Education's Council on Global Social Issues (with financial support from the Katherine A. Kendall Institute for International Social Work Education). This instructional module will contribute to broader efforts to integrate decolonial perspectives into social work curricula. Finally, as member of the Council on Social Work Education's Council on Global Social Issues, she presented a Connect session, *Global Perspectives on Disability Justice*, at the Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting in October 2025 in Denver, Colorado.

Shaanta Murshid, associate professor, gave the presentation *Bangladesh's July Biplob: Gender, politics, culture* in October at the Annual Conference on South Asia in Madison, Wisconsin. She also gave book talks in October on her book, *Intimacies of Violence: Reading Transnational Middle-Class Women in Bangladeshi America* (2024): at UB on October 2nd, and at Worcester State University's Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies department October 14th.

Yunju Nam, associate professor, presented her research paper, “Navigating Crisis and Exclusion: Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurs' Pandemic Experience and Access to COVID-19 Relief in the New York Metro Area,” at the Graduate School of Science and Technology Policy, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST). Co-authored with Seon-Mi Kim (Hunter College), Eun Jeong Lee (CUNY), and **Nancy Smyth**, professor, this qualitative study examines the experiences and responses of Korean immigrant entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawing on mixed-embeddedness theory, the research highlights how institutional and socio-cultural contexts of the host society, ethnic networks, and individual capacities collectively shaped entrepreneurs' pandemic experiences, emphasizing the crucial role of access to government relief programs in their business survival. Nam also presented the paper, “Financial Capability and Asset Building Among Precarious Workers: The Role of Institutional Support,” at two international conferences: the Global Forum for Financial Consumers in Seoul, Korea, and the 9th Scientific Conference: Protection and Security in the Financial Market in Łódź, Poland.

This study explores how organizational financial ecosystems—such as worker cooperatives and their networks, including unions, associations of worker co-ops, credit unions, and allied NGOs—and the collective financial structures they maintain influence the financial capability of precarious immigrant workers. Nam had three invited talks this summer: “Mutual insurance and social welfare policies,” K-S Cooperative Insurance Workshop on August 21, 2024, at Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul, Korea; “Navigating Crisis and Exclusion: Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurs’ Pandemic Experience & Access to COVID-19 Relief in the New York Metro Area” (with colleagues, including **Nancy Smyth**, professor) at Graduate School of Science & Technology Policy, Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology (KAIST) in Daejeon, South Korea, on August 13, 2025; and “English Proficiency, Community Language Resources, and Refugees’ Economic Integration: Findings from Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed-Method Studies” at the Distinguished Lecture Series, BK-21 Research and Education at Social Welfare Department, Chung-Ang University, Seoul, Korea, June 12, 2025. Nam was the organizer and a discussant for a webinar: “Standing Up for Democracy: Studies of Democratic Renewal in Korea,” sponsored by the Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis, the University at Buffalo School of Social Work, and the International Consortium for Social Development on May 5, 2025. In addition, she was appointed to the editorial board of the *Journal of the Korean Gerontological Society*.

Finally, Nam organized a policy roundtable here at UB: “Language Access and Asian American Communities: Policy, Practice and Community Actions in Changing Environments” October 27th, with speakers from across New York State and a professor from the University of Southern California. This was part of the UB Asia Research Institute’s Asia Policy Roundtable series and the UB School of Social Work’s Global to Local Speaker Series. Nam has three manuscripts forthcoming: “Linked Hate: Anti-Racist Movements and Asian American Linked Fate,” in *Race and Social Problems*; “Bridging the Gap: Awareness, Trust, and Reporting Anti-Asian Hate Crimes,” in the *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*; and “Alone or Together? Korean Americans’ Perspectives on Solidarity Against Hate,” in the *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*.

Mickey Sperlich, associate professor and interim PhD program director, presented at the 41st Annual Meeting of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS), in Baltimore, Maryland in September of 2025. Her paper, “A little psychoeducation goes a long way: Two models of support for parents with histories of trauma and risk for substance use,” was part of a symposium focusing on finding creative clinical solutions to address recovery in the context of parenting. In November of 2025, Sperlich traveled to Toronto, Canada to co-present with current doctoral student **EunSook Seong** and former MSW student **Amy Wlosinski** at the Marcé of North America 2025 conference: *Unlocking Insights in Perinatal Mental Health*. This paper also focused on the nexus of trauma, substance use and parenting: “Trauma-informed parenting education: A group-based

approach for parents healing from trauma and addiction.”

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Ophelia Morey, associate librarian, traveled to Montego Bay, Jamaica to collaborate on a community asset mapping project with Beverly Burte, a librarian at the University of the West Indies, MONA, Western Jamaica Campus. The goal of the collaboration is to develop library services and programming to support youth entrepreneurship in Jamaica, both on campus and within the broader community. The initial steps of the project were highlighted in their presentation, “Libraries as Catalysts: Building an International Collaboration to Support Youth Entrepreneurship” at the 2025 American Library Association’s annual meeting in Philadelphia, PA during the ALA International Relations Round Table Papers & Projects Session: Stronger Together Through Connections Worldwide: International Collaborations in Library Services.

Bryan J. Sajecki, librarian, presented at the annual Workshop for Instruction in Library Use (WILU) conference in Hamilton, Ontario, in June 2025. His presentation, “Critical Reflection in Research: Empowering Students Through Positionality,” examined the role personal experiences have in shaping the search habits of undergraduates. Grounded in Critical Information Literacy principles, the talk empowered librarians to reconsider how they teach research, inspiring critical self-awareness and a more personalized approach to information literacy. ♦

SIAW-ASAMOAH

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collaborations, particularly in the health sciences, social work and education; and facilitation of international conferences at UB including the Emerge Africa Conference in partnership with the All-Africa Students Union.

She has negotiated and implemented collaboration agreements with key partners, including the University of Ghana and the University of Professional Studies in Ghana. Her efforts in that country have facilitated student recruitment pipelines for SOM and other schools at UB.

Siaw-Asamoah joined SOM as a faculty member in 2013, having received her MBA from the School in 2005 and her PhD in Communication from UB in 2012. Since 2015 she has served as a certified coach and facilitator for the UB Center for Leadership & Organizational Effectiveness. ♦

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SIAW-ASAMOAH HONORED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Dorothy Siaw-Asamoah, clinical professor of organization and human resources and faculty director of the Center for Leadership and Global Impact in the School of Management, received the 2025 Award for Outstanding Contributions to International Education at UB during the annual awards luncheon on December 5 hosted by the Council on International Studies and Programs (CISP).

Presenting the award were President Satish K. Tripathi and Vice Provost for International Education Nojin Kwak. In addition to members of the Council, guests included colleagues from the School of Management such as Dean Ananth Iyer and members of Professor Siaw-Asamoah's family.

Introducing the awardee and over-viewing her contributions was Gwen

Applebaum, SOM's chief of staff, based on the nomination submitted by Naomi Smith Perrone. Siaw-Asa-

sub-Saharan Africa; innovative networking initiatives such as the Global Leadership Program and Experience the Globe that link participants virtually on multiple continents for immersive and robust experiential learning; education abroad leadership and teaching involving multiple programs each year in several countries; global and interprofessional research

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L to r: Nojin Kwak, Satish Tripathi, Dorothy Siaw-Asamoah, Ananth Iyer

moah is the fortieth recipient of the award, which has been conferred annually since 2004 and has honored faculty and administrators in all of UB's schools.

Among the diverse and longstanding contributions highlighted at the awards event are Siaw-Asamoah's pioneering international partnerships in the Global South, particularly in

UB INTERNATIONAL

is published twice yearly by the Office of International Education of the University at Buffalo, The State University of New York.

John J. Wood, Editor