

# RWVC NEWSLETTER

May 2023

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## ABOUT THE CENTER

*The Ralph W. Voorhees Center for Civic Engagement at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy seeks to enhance educational opportunities and facilitate innovative research through community based research and discussion. The Center is a collaborative effort of faculty, staff, and students and community development actors. The center conducts community based research and facilitates discussions about urban problems and innovative policy and practice solutions.*

# Welcome

The Voorhees Center is excited to welcome five new  
Ralph W. Voorhees Public Service Fellows:

Janet Cazares

Hamza Choudhry

Marcelo Redmond Miyoshi

Adeel Yaqoob

Adriana Zarza

The Center also welcomes new faculty affiliates:



Yen-Tyng Chen



Mike Smart



Nancy Wolff

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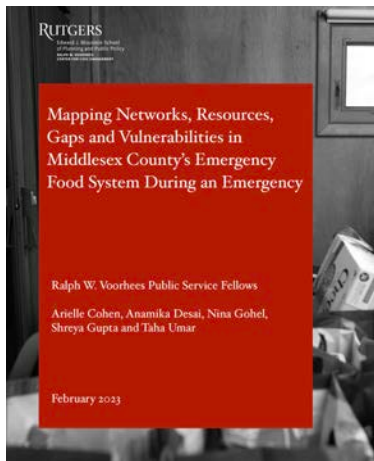
# RESEARCH CORNER

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## VOORHEES FELLOWS RESEARCH

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### Mapping Networks, Resources, Gaps and Vulnerabilities in Middlesex County's Emergency Food System during an Emergency



The Ralph W. Voorhees Public Service Fellows worked with REPLENISH, the Middlesex County Food Bank, to better understand the networks, resources, gaps, and vulnerabilities in the County's emergency food system. The objective was to understand how emergencies affect food pantries and food banks to ensure that people can access food in a crisis. Through interviews, observations, and archival research, the Fellows found that 1) social networks are critical to aggregate and distribute food and to provide information and support; 2) resources such as refrigeration, transportation, delivery, and volunteers are key sources of strength, and 3) many pantries do not have emergency or succession plans.

## CENTER RESEARCH

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### Black Congregations Developing Housing on Church Land



Emory United Methodist Church  
Photo Credit: Hazel Broadnax

**Nadia Mian's** article in [Shelterforce](#) looks at how Black churches are responding to shifts in religiousness, population change, and lack of housing by working to change land use regulations and asking how church property can serve a different function in the community. Black churches are building coalitions and working with city government and other organizations to create pre-development studies, participate in capacity-building programs, develop housing on their own properties, and advocate for changes to housing policy and zoning regulations. These efforts and initiatives are intended to soften the impact that gentrification and

displacement have on low-income neighborhoods and communities of color as the cost of housing increases.

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# INTERSECTIONS

## (A Focus on Affiliated Faculty Researchers)

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**ANDREA RESTREPO-MIETH**, Assistant Professor

Andrea Restrepo-Mieth's paper, "Learning from Mistakes: Reflective Planning, Simple Junctures, and Institutional Change," was published in *Planning Theory and Practice*. She examines how planners move from reflection to action in pursuit of institutional change and introduces the concept of "simple junctures" which are key moments in time that constitute opportunities to institutionalize new practices. The article is based on her research in Medellín, Colombia.

**ROBERT LAKE**, Professor

Bob Lake's article, "Value Magic," in *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* looks at how urban processes that encompass vast structures and practices engage in creating, extracting, and accumulating value in and from the urban landscape. Lake asks, "what is value and how does it attain its coercive power over urban life?" The paper is part of a theme issue that Mi Shih and Kathe Newman are editing from the Urban Studies Foundation-funded negotiating land and value conference series.

**MI SHIH**, Associate Professor

Mi Shih and Ying-Hui Chiang's research published in *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* examines the co-constitutive relationship between density techniques, their depoliticization effects, and heightened land commodification in Taiwan. The paper is part of a theme issue that Mi Shih and Kathe Newman are editing from the Urban Studies Foundation-funded negotiating land and value conference series.

**ERIC SEYMOUR**, Assistant Professor

Eric Seymour and Taylor Shelton's article entitled "How Private Equity Landlords Prey on Working-Class Communities of Color," was published in *New Labor Forum*. The paper focuses on the Atlanta region and describes the factors contributing to the increase of private equity and real estate investment trusts in single family home ownership and how this affects low-income working-class communities of color.

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# CONFERENCES

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## American Association of Geographers Denver, Colorado (March 23-27, 2023)

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Shiloh Deitz presenting at the AAG Conference  
Photo Credit: Eric Seymour

**Eric Seymour, Will Payne, Shiloh Deitz and Kathe Newman's** panel "Using Administrative Data to Better Understand the State of Affordable Rental Housing," discusses how administrative data is gathered, analyzed, and cleaned to better understand the state of affordable rental housing.

**Will Payne** organized and chaired a panel entitled, "Experimental Digital Mapping // Back to the Future // 1: Theory. This session was a showcase of new experiments in digital spatial representation beyond pin maps and polygons as well as excavation of historicized methods.

**Eric Seymour** presented his work on a panel that discusses "The Housing Crisis Beyond the Coasts." The panel examined the recent geography of the largest active single-family landlords in the US in a sample of urban counties reflecting different housing market dynamics, including the core counties of the Atlanta, Houston, and Las Vegas metro areas and Southeast Ohio.

## American Planning Association Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (April 1-4, 2023)

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Nadia Mian in Philadelphia

**Nadia Mian** organized and chaired a panel on faith-based development. In this presentation planners learned about new zoning-code changes, municipal programs that provide faith-based institutions with capacity-building support, and state housing policies that include religious-owned property, as well as innovative, mixed-use/adaptive-reuse case studies of houses of worship that are now productive community assets.

## Urban Affairs Association Nashville, Tennessee (April 26-29, 2023)

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**James DeFilippis'** colloquy presentation in the panel series entitled "Understanding the New Urban Political Economies" discussed how immigrant labor markets use the language of Racial Capitalism, and the implications of that endeavor for understanding urban theory more generally.

**Kathe Newman's** colloquy presentation, also in the "Understanding the New Urban Political Economies" panel series, discussed the relationship between financialization and urban change.



Kathe Newman, Shiloh Deitz, Will Payne, Eric Seymour and Lauren Nolan

**Shiloh Deitz, Lauren Nolan, Kathe Newman, and Eric Seymour** organized a panel entitled "Using Administrative Data to Better Understand the State of Affordable Rental Housing." The panel included a set of papers that demonstrated the importance of gathering, cleaning, and linking information about housing nested within administrative datasets to better understand challenges facing affordable rental housing today.

**Nadia Mian's** colloquy discussed faith-based property development. The discussion centered around steps that can be taken by faith institutions, municipalities, and community organizations to embrace houses of worship as they transition their property to innovative new uses.

**Will Payne's** presentation on Boston's tech landscape used a combination of archival, visual and spatial analytic methods to examine office locations in the Boston-area. The presentation showed how tech companies expanded back into New England because of the concentration of skilled digital labor, as well as the built environment and cultural landscape of suburban technology work.



Will Payne presenting at the UAA Conference



Andrea Restrepo-Mieth presenting at the UAA Conference

**Andrea Restrepo-Mieth** gave a talk on "Municipal Capacity, Civil Society, and Climate Change Adaptation: Evidence from Galápagos." She examined how municipalities with limited administrative capacity and low civil society mobilization address growing needs to plan for climate change adaptation.



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## RWV CENTER STUDENT AND ALUMI ACHIEVEMENTS

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Congratulations to **Olubori Agboola**, Bloustein Student Representative to the American Planning Association.



**Anamika Desai** (Voorhees Fellow '22) is interning with the New Jersey Department of Health Office of Cancer Control and Prevention. She will be joining the Rutgers Summer Service Internship program.



**Cecille de Laurentis** was accepted to the University of California Berkeley's City Planning PhD Program in the Fall of 2023.



**Nina Gohel** (Voorhees Fellow '22) was accepted to Peking University as a Yenching Scholar.



**Shreya Gupta** (Voorhees Fellow '22) will be attending Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in July 2023.



**Marcelo Remond Miyoshi** recently published an article entitled "Will America ever change its urban patterns?" in *Planetizen*.



**Elana Simon** is an urban planner, data scientist, and writer who will be joining USC's urban planning PhD program in the Fall of 2023.



**Wael Kanj** joined Rewiring America as a Research Associate where he will work with the Data Science team to develop analytical tools about electrification.