

President's Message

Looking Back and Moving Forward

For an association whose primary purpose is to foster community, camaraderie, and conversation, the recent coronavirus pandemic made it difficult for the Illinois Sociological Association to proceed with business as usual. When I assumed the position of president last year, the Board of Directors was in the process of planning the return to our in-person conference after a number of years apart and developing strategies to move the Association forward in the wake of the pandemic. I initially viewed this process as one of rebuilding—a process I believed may be difficult for the leadership team to manage. Fortunately, I quickly came to two realizations: (1) the ISA is not in need of *rebuilding* in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, we are *moving forward*; and (2) the process of moving forward is not something that can be managed from the top down, it is something that will be driven from the ground up by our many fantastic members. Reflecting on the passion and enthusiasm exhibited by our members in 2022, and learning more about the exciting work they are doing has left me excited about the year and road ahead for the ISA.

As we returned to our in-person conference in November, 2022, I was inspired by the excitement and enthusiasm our members brought to the conference, motivated by the productive conversations and exchange of ideas in the conference rooms and hallways, and reassured that the community and camaraderie that epitomizes the ISA was powerfully present. *We are not rebuilding, you are moving us forward.*

As we neared the end of 2022 and facilitated elections for student representative positions on the Board of Directors, I was inspired by the considerable interest in these positions, impressed with the qualifications of the nominees, and encouraged by the commitment to service exhibited by our student members. *We are not rebuilding, you are moving us forward.*

As I engage in conversations with our members about their work, I continue to be educated by their diverse research interests, inspired by their community engagement and leadership, and reassured that the Association's commitment to both idea development and community service are well reflected in the activities of our members. *We are not rebuilding, you are moving us forward.*

For the reasons outlined above, I am enthusiastic about the year ahead—not for what I can accomplish as president, but rather for what you will do to support the goals and values of the ISA and move the Association forward. I welcome the opportunity to be a part of that process.

Wade Smith, Ph.D.

President, Illinois Sociological Association

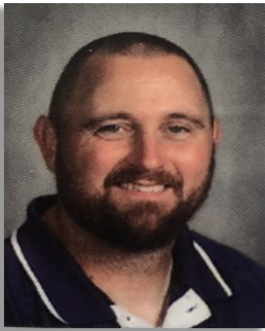


In this Newsletter

Board of Directors: New Members.....	p. 2
Member Spotlights	
<i>Poverty and Food Insecurity in Central Illinois</i> An interview with Dr. Michael Gillespie.....	p. 3
<i>Loyola Votes: The Power of Civic Engagement</i> An interview with Maggie Jones.....	p. 4
2022 Paper Competition Award Recipients.....	p. 5
2022 Notable Contributions.....	p. 5
Member Publications and Academic Works.....	p. 5

Board of Directors: New Members

As we look forward to the year ahead, we are excited to announce the addition of three new members to the ISA Board of Directors. We welcome Adam Reel (teacher, Arcola High School) in the position of High School Representative, Izzy Hernandez (graduate student, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign) in the position of Graduate Student Representative, and Camden Webb (undergraduate student, Eastern Illinois University) in the position of Undergraduate Student Representative.



Adam Reel

*High School
Representative*

Adam is a high school history, sociology, and psychology teacher at Arcola High School. He has been teaching in public education for twelve years. Adam specializes in student engagement activities and development of critical thinking skills. Adam has also been involved in helping organize several curriculum, behavior, and leadership programs across multiple school districts. In recent years he has been focusing his efforts in helping establish a dual credit program between Arcola High School and Eastern Illinois University. Through this partnership he has helped foster and develop college readiness skills. Adam received his bachelor's degree from Eureka College in secondary education and a master's degree in history from Eastern Illinois University. He currently resides in Arcola with his wife Heather and two children Emmalee and Patton.



Izzy Hernandez

*Graduate Student
Representative*

Izzy is excited to be serving as a student representative on the ISA board. They are originally from Elgin, Illinois and graduated from Eastern Illinois University in Spring 2022. Izzy is currently a sociology graduate student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign interested in topics of race, gender, and education in America. Their current focus is on disciplinary components that negatively impact students of color and contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. Izzy is passionate about sociology and grateful for every opportunity and experience that has brought them to study in a discipline they love and to be able to work with such talented scholars.



Camden Webb

*Undergraduate
Student Representative*

Camden attends Eastern Illinois University, majoring in Sociology and Philosophy with a minor in music. He is currently working on two undergraduate research projects, in the philosophy of comedy and the inequality of faculty and staff unions. His hobbies include composing music and playing video games, such as Elden Ring, Celeste, and Minecraft. Camden works as a Resident Assistant at Weller Hall, where he works and lives with residents. He is looking forward to graduate school once he graduates from Eastern.

Member Spotlights: Community Engagement and Leadership

Poverty and Food Insecurity in Central Illinois

An interview with Dr. Michael Gillespie

Michael Gillespie is Director of the Faculty Development and Innovation Center and Professor of Sociology at Eastern Illinois University. Among his research interests is a focus on poverty and food insecurity. He has a particular interest in educating others about the incidence of poverty and hunger in central Illinois. We interviewed Dr. Gillespie to learn more about the connection between his research and community engagement in these areas.

What spurred your research interest in poverty and hunger?

I have always had an interest in issues such as poverty and hunger—but it took taking an introductory college course in sociology then a class on the sociology of poverty that cemented the real interest in me. I grew up in a blue collar area of Metro Detroit adjacent to some relatively poor sections of the region, so it was part of the fabric of my environment and it stuck with me as I matured academically. When I graduated with my undergraduate degree in sociology, I knew I wanted to be a professor and study poverty and hunger—but I also wanted to do some “boots on the ground” work, so I got a Master of Social Work degree in program search and policy analysis to learn more about these issues from a programmatic and advocacy level.

What has your research revealed about poverty and hunger in central Illinois?

My original research in east central Illinois, now dating back almost twelve years, identifies this region as one of the poorest in the state—and one with tremendous income disparity. Coles County, in particular, is the most impoverished (on average, 17 to 20 percent of individuals, 25 to 27 percent of children, and 10 to 12 percent of all families) and food insecure (on average, 33 to 36 percent of individuals and nearly 25 percent of all families). I also used GPS mapping to show where impoverished areas are in the region in an effort for the public to see, statistically, where poverty and food insecurity are located.

How has your research informed your community engagement?

When I started my research on poverty in the area, it was an effort to illuminate the issue to the community. When I moved to Charleston and EIU in 2010, I wanted to know more about the area, especially the poverty and food insecurity issues in the area. I could see that there were areas of the city that were visibly affluent and some that were visibly struggling. But as I asked around for information, I quickly learned that no one had any—so I took it upon myself to do the work and try to educate the community. This seemed to me a natural thing to do—as it has been most of my life. I was involved in volunteer work and advocacy and activism beginning in high school and clear through my doctoral program—and have used my research and scholarship as a professor to remain involved in issues that need to be illuminated and shared through data.

What is in store for your future research into and action on these issues?



In the past eight or nine years I have shifted my research focus to food insecurity on college campuses. It is clearly aligned with my broader interests in poverty and hunger, but it is specific to the population that I engage with on a daily basis—college students. I have made this my priority and conduct an annual survey in October of food insecurity on EIU’s campus. Five year’s work of this annual data showed that, on average, 38 percent—nearly 2 in every 5—EIU students are at risk of food insecurity. Moreover, students who are food insecure are statistically significantly less likely to make adequate progress toward graduation, have more trouble paying attention in class, and feel like their academic engagement is lower than food secure students. This data led to a proposal to the president of the university to open a campus food pantry, and after nearly a year of activism and planning, I helped open the EIU Campus Food Pantry in October of 2021.

Loyola Votes: The Power of Civic Engagement

An interview with Maggie Jones

Maggie Jones is a master's student in the Department of Sociology at Loyola University Chicago. Her current research focuses on the connections between gender and fitness. After graduating in May, Maggie hopes to find a job in the public sector to gain work experience before she applies to Ph.D. programs. We interviewed Maggie to learn more about her involvement with and commitment to the campus initiative Loyola Votes.



What is Loyola Votes and what led to your interest in being involved with this initiative?

Loyola Votes is the get-out-the-vote initiative (GOTV) at Loyola University Chicago. Growing up, the importance of voting was thoroughly emphasized to me through school and American culture. But as I was registering to vote for the first time, I found there was a lack of accessible information about how to actually vote, especially as a college student. Because of my interests in political science, government, and sociology, I determined Loyola Votes was a cause I could contribute my time to in order to help other students become civically engaged. I started working for the university's Office of Civic Engagement in 2021 and was appointed to be the Project Manager of Loyola Votes ahead of the 2022 Midterm Elections.

What are some notable successes of Loyola Votes?

In 2020, Loyola was ranked as the 4-year university with the highest voter registration and voter turn out rate in Illinois through the All In Campus Democracy Challenge, a national initiative dedicated to increasing student voter turnout. In 2020, 85% of our eligible students were registered to vote, marking about a 9% higher margin than other institutions. We also increased our student voter turnout rate by 30% from 2018 to 2020, meaning not only were more students registering to vote, but they were actually getting out the door and casting a ballot.

We attribute many of these successes to our website which provides updated, accessible information about how to vote as a college student. Whether a student chooses to vote at home or in Chicago, we provide a step-by-step guide, demystifying the voter process.

What have you learned from your involvement with Loyola Votes?

Though the initiative's name is "Loyola Votes," implying the main focus is voting, I learned the importance of inclusivity in civic engagement efforts through this campaign. Loyola is home to numerous undocumented students who cannot vote, and many others who by seeing our government's long history of voter disenfranchisement toward communities of color, have concerns surrounding voting. Because of this, I learned the importance of making it clear that civic engagement is more than just voting—it's an initiative one can get involved in regardless of voter status. Thus, we attempted to also advertise other social justice efforts, like the university's campaign to double the Pell Grant and our initiative to help undocumented students, to ensure that all students could find a voice in our civic engagement efforts.

What advice would you give to others who might be interested in supporting or managing get-out-the-vote initiatives on other college campuses?

There is a huge gap in get-out-the-vote efforts that college campuses can help fill, so you are in the right place! College students frequently have questions about where they should vote (at home versus at school), how to change their voter registration, and where to access reliable information. Your initiative can help answer these questions.

Having a one-stop shop for voter information, including deadlines, outside resources, and information relevant to your campus (such as where nearby polling places are) is also key. From my own experience, I understand the frustrating process that is navigating voter registration. Thus, providing a comprehensive and accessible source eliminates a large barrier to voting.

Lastly, I would also suggest drawing off the numerous sources that are already doing good work in this area, like Vote.org and the All In Campus Democracy Challenge.

Whatever methods you choose, I wish you luck in your campaign. Happy voting!

Awards, Recognition, and Academic Works

2022 Student Paper Competition Award Recipients

The Illinois Sociological Association continues its tradition of recognizing and celebrating student scholarship. Winners of the Association's 2022 student paper competitions are recognized below:

Best Graduate Student Paper

Anthony Cusumano

Southern Illinois University—Carbondale

“Barroom Blood: An Exploration of the Relationship between Bars and Violence”

Best Undergraduate Student Paper (upper division)

Katie Wells

Eastern Illinois University

“Are Traditional, Western Gender Roles Affecting Cohesion and Morale in Gender Integrated Units?”

Best Undergraduate Student Paper (lower division)

Tiffany Walker

Eastern Illinois University

“Justice for Our Black Farmers”

2022 Notable Contributions

The Illinois Sociological Association is supported by the efforts of many volunteers and supporters that deserve recognition. In particular, the Association would like to recognize the many people that made the 2022 annual conference a success: volunteers, organizers, donors, session presiders, and others. A special thank you goes out to the following (in alphabetical order): Melissa Ames, Jarad Barnes, Zoe Bowers, Melissa Carr, Gracie Chapman, Jorge Chávez-Rojas, Angela Glaros, Darren Hendrickson, Izzy Hernandez, Don Holly, Keith Johnson, Kendra Kelly, Mari Kita, Ken Laundra, Bill Lovekamp, Ashley McDonald, Wade Smith, Jennifer Stevens, Camden Webb, Aaron White, and Vernon Woodley.

Recent Publications and Academic Works of ISA Members

Acar, Asena. 2020. "Christian Zionism and Doctrinal Islamophobia: Expediting the End Times." Master's thesis, Religion, University of Illinois. IDEALS, 116179.

Duncanson, Tom. 2021. "Future, Green, Orientation." Pp. 307-322 in *The Future as a Vision: Transitioning From the Anthropocene to the Biocene*, edited by M. Madi and M. Kennet. Green Economics Institute.

Duncanson, Tom. 2023 (forthcoming). "The Possibilities for Citizen Diplomacy in Climate Protection: A Critical Appraisal and a Guide for Participants." In *Climate Justice in the 21st Century*, edited by I. Garcia. Green Economics Institute.

Glaros, Angela with Mariah Slaughter. 2020. "Teaching the Anthropology of Food in East Central Illinois." *Anthropology News* (a publication of the American Anthropological Association), April 2, 2020. Available at <https://www.anthropology-news.org/articles/teaching-the-anthropology-of-food-in-east-central-illinois/>.

Glaros, Angela. 2021. "Friends, Family, Informants: Fieldwork as Relationship." Pp. 67-78 in *Field Stories: Experiences, Affect, and the Lessons of Anthropology in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by W. H. Leggett and I. Fadzillah Leggett. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Glaros, Angela. 2022. "Voicing the Byzantine Aesthetic." *Anthropology News* 63(1):22-26. Available at <https://www.anthropology-news.org/articles/voicing-the-byzantine-aesthetic/>.

Jones, Maggie. 2020. "But She's Just So Aggressive!: An Analysis of Gendered and Racialized Language During the 2020 United States Democratic Presidential Primary." Undergraduate thesis, Department of Sociology, Loyola University Chicago.

Karipek, Asena. 2020. "Portrayals of Jihad: A Cause of Islamophobia." *Islamophobia Studies Journal* 5(2): 210-225.

Laundra, Kenneth. 2022. "Restorative Justice in Ukraine: Understanding Practices and Challenges." *International Journal of Restorative Justice* 5(2): 263-280.

Laundra, Kenneth H., P.V. Fedorchenko-Kutuev, A.V. Baginsky, and O.P. Severynchyk. 2022. "Restorative Justice in Ukraine: A Grassroots Approach," *Bulletin of the National Technical University of Ukraine (Kyiv Polytechnic Institute)*. *Politology* 1(53):1-6.

Smith, Wade. 2021. "Social Movement Framing Tasks and Contemporary Racisms: Diagnostic and Prognostic Forms." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 7(2):194-207.