“WE FLY...” But Where?

For Cardinal sociology graduates, the answer has often been, “under the radar.” What can you do with a sociology degree from Ball State, anyway?

That used to be a mystery. Last year, however, we asked some of our alumni to tell us where they eventually landed after they left the nest. Here is a sample of what they reported: Director of Project Management for a major health provider. Director of Operations for a major public university. Partner in a law firm. Professor. Research Associate. Strategic Data Manager. Physician. Owner of an LLC. Business Director of a major government lab. The list goes on, and includes careers at private companies, in government, and with nonprofits. It turns out that one can do plenty with a sociology degree, and that, whether alone or combined with additional training, the discipline’s practicality need not remain a secret.

We are excited that our students follow such varied paths to success. The models and connections that they provide—that you provide—through alumni engagement activities like Sociology Surge (which you can read more about inside this issue) suggest to our students what their futures may hold, and build meaningful bridges to the world of careers beyond graduation. I am humbled to serve a department that has such alumni, and that is filled with dedicated students and award-winning researchers, instructors, and staff who are committed to using their skills to empower individuals and their communities. The perspective, knowledge, and skill set acquired through our program not only sets our students apart as they take on their first jobs, but also prepares them for life in a diverse and rapidly changing social world that will require perpetual learning and adaptation across the life course.

We hope that you will reach out to us via email, Facebook, or phone, or drop by to see us on campus. We would very much like to know what you have been up to and where you have flown; please stay in touch!
Thank you to our generous supporters!

Barbara Carter
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You help fund scholarships, student travel and conference attendance, professional development and immersive learning experiences, research projects, and more. Thank you for your time and support of our missions!

Thank you to our community partners!

2018 Scholarship Recipient

Shelby Sims was named the 2018 Tamney Scholarship recipient. Presented in honor of the career and contributions of departed faculty member, Dr. Joseph Tamney, the award recognizes students who demonstrate sound sociological ideas about the causes of social behavior throughout their sociology courses.

Congratulations to our outstanding seniors!

Based on academic record and faculty recommendation, Olivia Power, pictured on the right with department chair Dr. Chad Menning, and Laura Drascic (not pictured) are recognized for their hard work and determination.

Congratulations to our outstanding first-year graduate student, Olivia Ashba!

These students have received recognition by the Graduate School for a variety of achievements, including giving a presentation at a conference, getting grants or fellowships, and authoring articles.

Congratulations!

Thomas Henry
Sunni Matters
Katie Savage
Morgan Self
In the spring, students of Melinda Messineo’s capstone course partnered with Second Harvest for their immersive learning project. After meeting with the community partner and determining needs of study, the group conducted an analysis of their research and presented their data, which Second Harvest evaluated for any gaps in their existing programs, as well as the possibility to create new programs to benefit the community. The goal is to provide data similar to that from a now-discontinued survey conducted by Feeding America.

Congratulations for creating lasting community bonds, combating food insecurity within the community, and providing in-depth analysis.

Sociology students under the direction of their instructor, Mr. John Anderson, presented their research on selected topics about Race and Ethnic Relations in America this November. Students showcased their academic posters communicating the highlights of their research, and engaging the public in meaningful discussion about their findings. Some of the presentation topics included:

- Immigration Law/Policy and its impact on undocumented students
- White guilt
- The intersectionality of African and Latin culture

Thank you to all who presented and attended!
Alumni News

Gerry Cox, PhD
(graduate of Ball State University Sociology, class of '65), emeritus faculty at University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, received two awards this year. His book, "Sociology of the American Indian," was recognized with an honorable mention for the Midwest Sociological Society’s Distinguished Book Award in Minneapolis on March 23rd.

In addition, he received the Robert Fulton CDEB Founder’s Award for Outstanding University Teaching, Research, Publication, and Professional Service in the Field of Death, Dying, and Bereavement at the International Death, Grief, and Bereavement Conference in LaCrosse earlier this month. Congratulations, Professor Cox!

Sociology Surge Connects Alumni with Students

Sociology Surge seeks to assist current and perspective sociology students at Ball State University to better understand career and professional development opportunities in the discipline by means of fostering connections with alumni, faculty, academic advisors, student affairs professionals, and other like-minded individuals. A panel of program alumni share their stories, faculty and staff implant their wisdom and advice, and current students present their research.

Sociology Surge was made possible by the Department of Sociology, the Ball State University chapter of Alpha Kappa Delta, Student Government Association, and the GEM fund. If you would like to be involved in a future Surge event, contact us!

Meet Ball State University Sociology Alumni

Angela D. Lewis serves as the Corporate Operations Department Director and Business Director for the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC), Crane Division.

NSWC Crane is a science and engineering focused federal laboratory within the Department of Navy, Naval Sea Systems Command that is responsible for technical solutions and total lifecycle leadership for electronic warfare, expeditionary systems, and strategic missions that enable and protect our nation’s warfighters.

Wesley E. Heath is the assistant director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Cross-Cultural Affairs, at Louisiana State University.

In his current role as Assistant Director of Multicultural Affairs at Louisiana State University, Wes is responsible for researching, designing, and implementing strategies that encourage students to work across social lines, exploring complex notions of diversity, intersectionality, and social justice.

Myron C. Duff, Jr. is the Director of Workforce Readiness and Program Development, an initiative of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) Office of Community Engagement.

Myron is also the Convener for the Great Places 2020 in Indianapolis where he is responsible for supporting and facilitating neighborhood-led community and economic development efforts.
Petts’ Paternity Research Published

Dr. Richard Petts co-authored a research article that finds that fathers seldom take parental leave even when it’s available. Covered by the Bloomberg News, Petts’ research study showed that many dads say they support paid leave for fathers to care for newborn children, but it seems that the vast majority of men don’t take more than a week off.

Congratulations to Dr. Petts!

John. J Hill Lifelong Learning Award

The Department of Sociology congratulates John Anderson and Kathy Herbert on receiving the John J. Hill Lifelong Learning Award from the Association of Lifelong Learners during a banquet on December 6th!

Mr. Anderson, who is an alum from our master’s program and teaches classes in the department, and Ms. Herbert, who is our undergraduate advisor, were nominated independently by different faculty members. Kudos to both of you!

Dr. Rachel Kraus Publishes New Book Chapter

Dr. Rachel Kraus has published a chapter entitled, “Qualitative Methods and Interviewing” in the latest edition of Principles of Research in Behavioral Science.

This book, which focuses on conceptual issues inherent in conducting research, is intended for graduate students in a variety of behavioral science disciplines, including (but not limited to) psychology, sociology, education, health, gender studies, and religion.

Congratulations, Dr. Kraus!

Dr. Melinda Messineo Promoted to Full Professor

The Ball State University Trustees recently approved the promotion of Dr. Melina Messineo to full professor. This promotion recognizes the tireless commitment to scholarship and teaching that typifies Dr. Messineo’s career. Congratulations and thank you for your contributions!

NCSA’s New President

Ball State Sociology enjoyed strong representation at this year’s annual meeting of the North Central Sociological Association in Pittsburgh.

Dr. Melinda Messineo (left) is the incoming president of the organization, and Drs. Holtzman, Kraus, and Menning hold additional leadership positions.

Congratulations to them as well as to the many students and faculty from our department who presented their work!

Department welcomes new faculty member,

**Dr. Ellis Logan!**

Dr. Logan joins us this year as a newly-minted PhD from Penn State with a dual title in sociology and demography. His research interests include health disparities, food security and accessibility, and neighborhood effects.

He is teaching a variety of courses, including medical sociology, food and society, and statistics.
Want MORE sociology news from Ball State?

Check out our updates on Facebook!

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We invite you to contact us with news, comments, and questions!