

SOCIOLOGY AT WORK

ALUMNI BIOGRAPHIES

Jeff Armstrong

Assistant Registrar, UW-Madison Office of the Registrar

Upon graduation, Jeff enrolled in the UW-Madison sociology graduate program with a focus on gender. After deciding the PhD was not right for him, he completed his MS and spent the next two decades on the research team of an interdisciplinary study of child development. He then took his experience and skills in data, writing, analysis, and management to the Office of the Registrar, where he has worked for nearly five years.

Zach Baumgart

Lead Research Analyst, Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Zach is a sociology graduate of UW's PhD program under Professor Pam Oliver. He specializes in criminal justice, racial inequality, political sociology, and economic sociology. Zach fields questions for the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, to inform internal policy and practices, or to connect those outside the department to their resources. Along with his colleagues, Zach reports on our population, builds new research, and provides evidence-based recommendations.

Brandon Breunig

Reporting and filing specialist, Cuna Mutual Group

Brandon was recruited by a sociology professor into the ranks of the post-modern neo-marxist movement. In his spare time he works on data reporting in the insurance industry.

Chezarae Dickson

Account Executive, Zendesk

Chezarae works as a Sales Executive, investing time in Advertising, Photography Services, and currently Technology Sales. The study of sociology has equipped her with a deeper understanding of our world, helped her to navigate a variety of professional and personal settings.

Jeremy Dumke

Human Resources Generalist, United Alloy

Jeremy was a returning adult student who graduated in 2014 with a double major in Sociology and Political Science. He has worked in the healthcare field, court system and currently is in Human Resources. The courses he took at UW-Madison gave him the confidence and skill set that was needed to succeed.

Jennifer Dykema

Distinguished Scientist, UW Survey Center

Jennifer is a Distinguished Scientist and Senior Survey Methodologist at the UW-Madison Survey Center where she conducts research on questionnaire design, interviewer-respondent interaction, and methods to increase response

SOCIOLOGY AT WORK

rates. She advises a broad range of investigators across disciplines on all types of study design and data collection. Jennifer has taught research methods at UW–Madison and the Summer Institute at the University of Michigan. She earned her B.A. in psychology and sociology from the University of Michigan, and her M.S. and Ph.D. in sociology from the UW-Madison. Before coming to Wisconsin, Jennifer worked at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center.

Acton Jiashi Feng

Master Student, University of Chicago

Acton has done different jobs after he graduated including project manager, sales, GRE instructor, and online teaching assistant. He is currently a master student of sociology in Chicago.

Michelle Frazier, JD

CHC - SVP/Chief Compliance Officer, Advocate Aurora Health

Michelle Bergholz Frazier is Senior Vice President and Chief Compliance Officer of Advocate Aurora Health, the 9th largest health system in the country. Michelle also majored in Psychology at UW-Madison and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. She received her law degree from the University of Minnesota and served on the Minnesota Law Review. Michelle practiced with von Briesen & Roper in Milwaukee for 12 years, focusing on regulatory compliance and other general health law matters. She also is an adjunct professor for Marquette University Law School, teaching Health Care Fraud and Abuse. Michelle's current role perfectly utilizes both her undergraduate and law degrees because it requires an understanding of applicable law and of social/human behavior.

Eric Grodsky

Professor, University of Wisconsin

Eric is a professor of sociology and educational policy studies and co-director of the Madison Education Partnership, a research-practice partnership between UW and the Madison Metropolitan School District. Prior to grad school he consulted on educational policy in Washington, D.C.

Kurt Harthun

Battalion Chief, Menomonee Falls Fire Department

Kurt was a volunteer firefighter when he arrived on campus in 1988. He continued fire training and volunteering while attending Madison, with hopes of a job in the public safety sector. He has used the skills learned at UW in his daily job and to promote himself to the position of Battalion Chief.

Kim Hinkley

Curriculum & Programming Director, The Well Preschool

At The Well Preschool, Kim works to develop their 4K program, writes content for the school's website, blog and social media, and plans community events. Prior to this, she was the Associate Director of Advancement for the UW-Madison School of Human Ecology, working closely with the advancement team to develop strategies to build the pipeline of alumni support through planning and managing events and communications. After earning her Master of Arts in Teaching, Kim served as an AmeriCorps program coordinator at

SOCIOLOGY AT WORK

an under-resourced elementary school in San Francisco, running a youth development program for the nonprofit Playworks. It was in those two years of intensive school-based service that she developed a strong desire to work in the educational sector. When Playworks opened its doors in Illinois she stepped into a program associate role and helped launch programming in Chicago. Her role included making connections with other community-based nonprofits and initiating relationships with Chicago-based companies. She was again promoted to development associate to focus on city-wide development for the organization. Kim has been working in education and nonprofits her entire career. What drew her initially to this work was a chance to make a positive impact within communities, something she has done in every position she has held.

Nicholas Hoffmann

IT - UW-Madison Survey Center, UW Survey Center

Susie Jodie

Speech and language pathologist, Madison Metropolitan School District

After graduating, Susie returned to school to obtain a Masters Degree in Communication Disorders, as she had always wanted to work in a field where she could helping people. Her degree gave her an opportunity to learn about different facets of people and humankind and the world around her. This background helped spur Susie's career where she works with children with special needs as well as with many adult professionals.

Kate Krueger

Senior Information Processing Consultant, UW Survey Center

Kate first joined the UW Survey Center in March of 2009 as an intern in the programming department. She became a full-time programmer in 2011 and currently works with the programming team to write and debug survey instruments, clean and deliver data, and train new staff. Much of her work focuses on complex CAPI instrument design. At UW Kate was a member of the Concentration in Analysis and Research program.

Laura Mael

Public Relations|Business Development|Marketing Strategist|Entrepreneur,

Laura is the founder and CEO of Career Solutions by Laura. Her professional experience is in banking, insurance, non-profit agency, consumer advocacy, and as an entrepreneur. In 2017 she decided to use her skills, knowledge, and experience to create and build her business and help others grow in their careers. Along the way, Laura discovered her passion for creating and building relationships, designing compelling narratives, and leading and developing teams. Laura is a recognized coach, advocate, idea generator, and master collaborator who asks the critical questions needed to advance the objectives of those around her.

Vanessa McDowell

CEO, YWCA Madison

SOCIOLOGY AT WORK

Tami McFarlane

VP of Operation, Restaino & Associates Realtors

Tami graduated in 1993 with a BA in Sociology and English. She had a few other positions after graduation, but has spent 22 years in Real Estate. Tami has her brokers license, and helps buyers and sellers with the home buying and selling process. Tami also helps manage Restaino & Associates Realtors, with 8 offices across 3 counties and oversees all HR tasks for the company.

Emily McKinney

Product & Data Analyst, Equilo

With a background in quantitative data analytics, data visualization, sociology, environmental studies, and a little programming, Emily is particularly passionate about social impact and about how to communicate and visualize information in a way that is approachable and effective. After graduating with a Concentration in Analysis and Research, she moved to Boulder to work at Egg Strategy as a quantitative brand strategist and market researcher. There she used rigorous quantitative methodologies to analyze survey data, deduce consumer insights, and produce creative brand strategy for companies like Celestial Seasonings, Fender Guitars, Gardein, and GSK. Emily quit to travel the world for a year. She is now working for an international development and gender analysis startup called Equilo, where she applies her skills to help design user interface, structure and organize a complex database, and manage technical partners, forming a link between the development and research teams.

Marie Nitschke

Programmer, UW Survey Center

After college Marie started at Tetra Tech, in a consulting and energy evaluation branch of an engineering company. There she oversaw the data collection of a range of surveys from energy use and appliance recycling to big game hunting. In her current role she develops web surveys and manages data collection through CAPI and CATI efforts in a wide variety of topics, from healthcare to natural resources and education.

Jennifer Norr

Vice President, Consumer Experience Unit, CUNA Mutual Group

Jennifer started in the CAR Program and got into analytics where she specializes in financial services.

Chloe Novak

Project Manager, Epic

Martin Preizler

Retired

Marty's education has allowed him to understand, appreciate and value people from diverse backgrounds. This enriched his professional experiences and contributed to his success. Now retired, Marty served for over forty

SOCIOLOGY AT WORK

years in executive positions in Wisconsin state government, managed care organizations, and higher education. He served as President and CEO of three health insurance companies in Madison, Portland and Minneapolis, including ten years leading Physicians Plus Insurance Corp. In his early career he directed the WI Medicaid program. From 2009-2014 he served as the Dean of the School of Business at Edgewood College. At Edgewood he developed, coordinated and taught in the MBA in Health Systems Leadership Program, including courses in Organizational Effectiveness and Improvement, Health Systems Strategic Management, Principles of Health Insurance, and the MBA-HSL Capstone course. Marty's expertise is in leadership, strategy, process management and quality improvement. He served as a National Baldrige examiner and Wisconsin Forward Award judge, and has served on many community boards.

Mindy Rappe

Director eCommerce Solutions, Suttle-Straus

Mindy has been managing teams for over 18 years and recently more involvement in marketing tactics that require research and data. While in college she gravitated to sociology because she enjoyed the content. It was more about expanding her education rather than preparing for a specific career. After college Mindy entered a career in graphics and management and spent 17 years at American Girl, most recently as the Director of a fast-paced creative services group. A year ago, she made a career change to Suttle-Straus as the Director of eCommerce providing software development leadership, strategic direction, and quality assurance related to Suttle-Straus's S4 MRC e-commerce platform that provides high quality graphic and marketing services to regional, national, and global customers. She is currently pursuing an Associate Degree at Madison College.

Molly Reinhard

Director, Pre-Professional Advising, UW-Madison

Molly had a winding undergraduate path that included one semester in Sellery Hall in the fall of 1999, a couple of years away from school to work, 3 semesters at Madison College (MATC), and finally graduating from UW-Madison in December 2005. After one year as an AmeriCorps VISTA in North Madison, she started working at UW-Madison in student services and has now worked on campus for over 12 years - as a pre-college programs coordinator, an undergraduate advisor, and now as a director of two advising units who serve students and alumni interested in careers in healthcare and law. In the midst of her career development, Molly pursued graduate coursework in counseling and education, ultimately gaining a Masters of Science in Cultural Foundations of Education and Community Engagement from UW-Milwaukee.

Emma Romell

PhD student, UW-Madison

Emma graduated in 2018 with certificates in Gender & Women's Studies and Education Policy Studies. She worked as a digital advertiser and strategist for a political consulting company for a year before starting a Ph.D. program here this fall. Her research interests include inequality, gender/race/class, public policy, families, and education, and her goal is to be a professor in Sociology or a related field.

SOCIOLOGY AT WORK

Matias Scaglione

Data Scientist and Researcher, WI Dept. of Revenue

Prior to his current role, Matias previously worked as a Senior Economist at the Wisconsin Dep. of Workforce Development, a Data Scientist at the UW-Madison Graduate School, and a Research Fellow at the Inter-American Development Bank. Matias completed his Ph.D. in Sociology at UW-Madison in 2012, with a concentration in labor markets and quantitative methods, and received a master's degree in economics from the Universidad de San Andrés, in Argentina, in 2001.

Sarah Stewart

Assistant Director of Clinical Research, UW Carbone Cancer Center

Sarah also majored in biology and after graduation and applied to be a clinical research study coordinator, not knowing anything about the career field. It turned out to be a perfect match for her double major - she worked directly with patients and physicians, and began to learn about the medical field. She worked her way up and now runs the largest clinical research program on campus, advancing cancer treatment and care.

Julie Tymorek

Mental Health Counselor, Julie Tymorek Counseling LLC

Julie graduated in 2009 with a minor in women's studies. After working in nonprofit communications and fundraising for a number of years, she decided to pursue her dream of becoming a therapist and entered UW-Whitewater's Counselor Education program in 2016. Julie completed her master's this past May and recently opened her own private practice here in Madison where she works mostly with couples and young women.

Jeanne Wagner Rodriguez

Marketing Manager, Overture Center for the Arts

Jeanne has over 20 years of marketing experience, including project management, coordinating large projects from start to finish, developing and executing strategic marketing plans; managing groups and meetings in a client-focused role and the proven ability to work in a collaborative team-oriented environment. In her current role, she assists in creating the overall strategy for various marketing campaigns to drive sales, managing budgets, creating creative campaigns leading to the cultivation of positive customer experiences. Prior to joining Overture, she held such roles as business development/marketing administrator, marketing coordinator, marketing assistant, and project assistant in the engineering/architectural industry. At UW-Madison she studied Sociology and Behavioral Science & Law. These majors have made her more aware of buying behaviors and why patrons may act or behave in certain ways.