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## THE GWIPP REPORT



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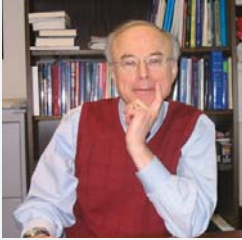
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# Message from the Director



I have just returned from a sabbatical in which I spent four months as an Academic Visitor in the School of Public Policy at the University of Victoria in Wellington, New Zealand and four months in the same capacity in the Department of Government at the London School of Economics. I had a wonderful time and made substantial progress on the research project I had designed for the sabbatical – the creation of a framework for comparing national systems of local governments across countries. In fact, the first article from that project will shortly be published in *Government and Policy*.

I was pleased when I returned to find that GWIPP was in excellent shape and everything was running smoothly. Lest anyone thinks that GWIPP can run on automatic pilot, let me assure you that I do not believe that this is the case at all. Instead GWIPP's smooth functioning is a direct result of the hard work and dedicated performance of Garry Young, who served as Acting Director in my absence, and of the other members of the GWIPP staff.

There are a few events and accomplishments that I think are worthy of highlighting. We recently hosted, in collaboration with the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, the first in a series of annual Property Tax Roundtables. The Roundtable is part of a multi-year collaboration with Lincoln in which we are engaging in multiple efforts: an annual collection of data on the property tax and its structure and administration in the 50 states (involving a team of researchers led by Nancy Augustine, Senior Research Associate, GWIPP), several research projects conducted by GWIPP related to the property tax, and the annual Roundtable. The papers are available at <http://www.gwu.edu/~gwipp/lincoln/roundtable.html>.

The papers presented at the conference on urban and regional policy effects cosponsored by GWIPP, the Brookings Institution, and the Urban Institute last March will be published as a book by the Brookings Institution Press sometime next year. The three cosponsors are in the planning stage of putting together the next conference on urban and regional policy effects, which will be held on June 5-6, 2008.

We are also particularly proud that Sharon Lambert, a Policy Research Scholar in the Psychology Department, recently received major funding from NIH for a study of urban neighborhood contexts and depression in African-American adolescents. Jennifer Spencer, a Policy Research Scholar in the International Business Department of the School of Business also received a major grant from NSF for a study of how multinational enterprise (MNE) investment into a developing country affects indigenous firms operating in the same industry. Both of these grants resulted from proposals prepared through the Policy Research Scholar program.

It's good to be back!

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hal Wolman".

# What Can GWIPP Do For You?

## External Funding Partners

GWIPP can call upon the skills of the full range of University faculty, as well as the talents of GW's graduate students serving as research assistants, to carry out research projects. Many GWIPP researchers have extensive experience in the academic, government, and nonprofit areas, and are well-suited to bring the strengths of each area to each project. GWIPP researchers have published extensively in their fields of expertise. Students — who themselves may have notable experience in policy research - are eager to learn from their academic mentors and often bring a fresh perspective to research projects.

## GW Faculty

GWIPP provides a variety of useful resources for GW faculty interested in pursuing public policy research. We offer:

- Help with putting together research teams by identifying and recruiting other faculty with similar interests or skills useful to the project;

- Help with transforming an area of research interest into a viable research concept;

- Assistance in identifying potential external funding sources that may be interested in that research concept, many of which already have a funding relationship with GWIPP;

- Help with constructing funding proposals, developing budgets, navigating the human subjects (IRB) process, and submitting the proposals;

- The Policy Research Scholar program (for more detail see page 8), which offers targeted assistance for faculty members pursuing policy research;

- Help administering and managing grants once awarded.

## GW Graduate Students

GWIPP hires many graduate students from across campus each year as research assistants on public policy research projects. Many employers look for graduates who have experience with funded or client-centered research. Students benefit from working closely with policy researchers on a wide range of current policy issues, learning firsthand how to design and implement research projects, and then conveying findings to a target audience. Some projects provide an opportunity to present research at conferences, submit articles for publication in academic journals, and can also provide useful background research for the student's own research interests, including dissertation work.

Consult the GWIPP website ([www.gwu.edu/~gwipp](http://www.gwu.edu/~gwipp)) for more information about the type of projects in which GWIPP is engaged. Contact Garry Young ([YoungG@gwu.edu](mailto:YoungG@gwu.edu)) if you are interested in research assistant opportunities with GWIPP.

# Property Tax Project Continues

By: Nancy Augustine

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the George Washington Institute of Public Policy have embarked on the second year of a multi-year collaborative project to compile data and generate research on the property tax in the U.S. The project is intended in part to fill a gap left when the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) was disbanded in the mid 1990s and ceased publishing its annual volume, *Significant Features of Fiscal Federalism*.

## Property Tax Policy Roundtable

An important component of this collaboration is an annual roundtable in which scholars present and discuss papers on important property tax policy issues. The 2007 roundtable was the first in this series, intended to help inform the discussion of major property tax policy issues in the United States. The general theme for the 2007 roundtable was "Erosion of the Local Property Tax Base: Trend, Causes, and Consequences." Increased reliance on residential property to generate revenue, coupled with soaring property values in many parts of the country in the last decade, have placed pressure on local officials to respond to concerns about higher property taxes. The result has been erosion of the tax base through a variety of devices designed to relieve residential property tax burdens (e.g., tax and expenditure limitations and circuit breakers) and to accomplish other social and economic purposes through exemptions or abatements (e.g., local economic development incentives). The papers provide background on recent trends, examine several of the important responses to the real (or perceived) increasing importance of residential property, and estimate the extent of tax base erosion and its effects. A compendium of roundtable papers is expected to be published in early 2008.

## Significant Features of the Property Tax

The other component of the collaboration is development of an extensive collection of material on the property tax in the U.S. Senior Research Associate Nancy Y. Augustine has been working with a web site development firm to design and implement a user-friendly, web-based interface for access to the material, scheduled for launch in early 2008. Preformatted tables and state profiles will provide easy access to the key features of tax relief programs, structural arrangements, tax rates and limitations, and annual statistics. Users will be able to sort and screen data to focus on a subset of results. A feedback mechanism will allow users to comment on changes. Once the site is fully implemented, updates are expected to be available quarterly. An extract of the data set will also be converted to SAS format to allow researchers to perform statistical analysis. All categorical data will be included in the SAS data set. For more information about the project and the data collection, contact Dr. Augustine at [nya@gwu.edu](mailto:nya@gwu.edu) or visit <http://www.gwu.edu/~gwipp/lincoln/>.

Nancy Augustine is a Senior Research Associate with GWIPP. Her research focuses on urban policy and intergovernmental issues.

# Measuring the Economic Impacts of Homeland Security Policies

By: Charlotte Kirschner

What is the regional impact of banning general aviation from Reagan National Airport? What are the costs to raising the homeland security threat level from yellow to orange? How much of the costs of creating redundancy in the electric power grid should be attributed to a homeland security policy when consumers will also benefit from the redundancy in the event of severe weather? What are the costs of increased screening of containers, and should the global impact of these costs be included in a national cost-benefit analysis? These are the questions faced by policy makers trying to reduce the threat of terrorism, while minimizing costs.

Unlike national defense, policies intended to promote homeland security are not exempt from the Office of Management and Budget's requirements that government regulatory programs with costs of \$100 million or greater be subject to regulatory impact analysis which requires a careful review of the costs of such measures in relation to the benefits derived by the policy. This requirement motivated the Homeland Security Institute, a Federally Funded Research and Development Center, to ask GWIPP to develop a manual to assist homeland security policy makers choose when and how to apply economic tools to measure the effects of homeland security policies.

The guide focuses on cost-benefit analysis (CBA) and economic impact analysis (EIA). The chapter on CBA highlights how to account for hard-to-measure impact that often arises in homeland security policies, like delays in travel time, delays in shipping goods, and in the value lost by a change in amenities (e.g., obstructing views by placing jersey-barriers in strategic locations). Since many homeland security policies result in dual benefits by reducing the impact of natural hazards, the manual discusses how to differentiate between secondary effects that are not separate costs and those that are dual costs and should be counted separately in the analysis. A major challenge of using CBA on homeland security policies is that the main benefit of the policy is a reduction in the probability of a terrorist attack occurring. However, this reduction in probability is difficult to measure. The guide recommends using a method first suggested by Richard Posner, who uses an inverse cost-benefit approach to estimate the magnitude of risk reduction. The authors demonstrate how these techniques could be used in the decision to go from threat level yellow to orange in San Francisco. In this example, it was estimated that raising the threat level for 20 days would cost roughly \$23.8 million, and the inverse cost-benefit approach suggested that the probability of a successful attack would be lowered by just under two-tenths of one percent.

An alternative method of measuring the economic effects of homeland security policies is EIA. Where CBA is used to measure the direct impacts of a policy, EIA can be used to demonstrate the impact of a policy on the regional, national, or global economy by accounting for impacts on wages, land use, and employment, etc. The chapter on EIA discusses seven different models for conducting an EIA along with the assumptions that are made in each of the models, and under what circumstances each model should be used. The guide applies the EIA framework to determine the economic impact of banning general aviation from Reagan National Airport. The authors use the EIA models and show a shift in output from a large city where wages are high to a small city where wages are low

Charlotte Kirschner is a Graduate Research Assistant with GWIPP. She received her Master of Social Service from Bryn Mawr College and her B.A. in Psychology and Women's Studies from Syracuse University, is a PhD candidate in Public Policy concentrating in national security with a specific interest in homeland security and terrorism.

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# RESEARCH PROFESSOR PROFILE

## Julia Friedman-Gaff

By: Pamela Blumenthal

Dr. Julia Friedman-Gaff grew up in Missouri. With her grandfather the publisher of a local weekly newspaper, she was raised in a family that recognized the importance of political events and civic involvement. Her parents, who were smart, practical, and wonderful problem-solvers, may have contributed to Julia's desire to pursue math and economics; they certainly are part of the reason for her commitment to give back to the community. She received her bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of Missouri and PhD in economics from the University of Oregon. Julia was a professor of economics at the University of Oregon, the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, and Macalester College in Minnesota, where she also chaired the Department of Economics.

Julia came to Washington, DC in 1992, taking a two year leave of absence from Macalester to work in the Office of Tax and Revenue. She still recalls feeling overwhelmed by the challenge of the job after completing her interview. She was, apparently, up to the challenge, remaining in DC and serving as Chief Economist and Director of the Office of Tax and Economic Policy before becoming Deputy Chief Financial Officer for Revenue Analysis. Julia found the job fascinating. As she explains, "there are fewer than 100 jobs like that around the country." But she admits, most of her colleagues wouldn't be willing to get within ten miles of the job. She likens her work as being the District's equivalent of the Congressional Budget Office. The work involved knowing what was happening in the economy and linking it to the tax system. Using the tax data, she forecasted future revenues. Although estimates provide confidence intervals, a point estimate had to be selected – a difficult task, since revenue estimates are the basis of budgets and policy negotiations. Her work also involved analysis of legislation, since all legislation is required to have a fiscal impact statement, as well as working on the quality of the District's credit for bond issuance.

Admittedly, she misses her former job, but after fourteen years in a "political cuisinart," she was exhausted and ready for a change. At GWIPP, Julia's research focuses on issues similar to her previous work. She is interested in whether the District can be solvent in the short and long term without any change in the Federal government. She also is interested in writing a book on the winners of the Cafritz Awards, which annually recognize five DC government employees who provided outstanding performance and exemplary service. She thinks their stories provide important lessons on public service.

Dr. Friedman Gaff's commitment to serving others is not confined to local activities. She is working on developing micro business for women in Mali, the third poorest country in the world. Julia is trying to help them create an industry by learning to cut scraps of fabric into quilting squares that can be assembled in kits for quilters in the U.S. This business also presents opportunities for young girls in Guinea who are some of the 10,000 war orphans currently being cared for by Save the Children. You only wonder how Julia finds the time and energy for these various activities until you meet her. Then you understand – she doesn't know any other way. Her world is one of public service, and if she does write a book on distinguished public servants, I hope there is room for a chapter on her to serve as a guide for us all.

Pamela Blumenthal is a Graduate Research Assistant with GWIPP currently pursuing a PhD from The George Washington University.

# RESEARCH PROJECTS

The following is a sampling of ongoing research projects at GWIPP. GWIPP Research covers topics such as Economic Policy Studies, Homeland Security, Land Use, Planning and Growth Management, Policy Research Methods, Social Policy, State and Local Fiscal Policy, Urban Policy, and Washington Area Studies. For a complete set of GWIPP research projects please visit the GWIPP website <http://www.gwu.edu/~gwipp/research.htm>

**PROJECT:** What Happens After Manufacturing Jobs Disappear? Non-manufacturing Alternatives for Industrial Regions

**INVESTIGATORS:** Hal Wolman, Nancy Y. Augustine, Patricia Atkins, Leah Curran, Lisa Lowry (GWIPP); Howard Wial, Alec Friedhoff (Brookings Institution)

**FUNDER:** Sloan Foundation

The continued loss of manufacturing jobs in the U.S. is a well-known and well-studied phenomenon that continues to be a concern to business, labor, elected officials and policymakers at all levels of government, and researchers. Yet we know relatively little about what happens in places that have lost manufacturing jobs. Have other jobs filled the vacuum, or is there a net loss of employment? If other jobs have replaced manufacturing jobs, what sectors have they been in, and how do wages in sectors where jobs have been gained compare to wages in the manufacturing sectors where jobs have been lost? What steps have the public sector, business and other sectors taken to change the industry, technological, and/or product mix of the metropolitan area economy, and how effective have those steps been? The study focuses on U.S. metropolitan areas that had concentrations of manufacturing jobs above the national average in 1990 and that lost manufacturing jobs between 1990 and 2005. It will describe the patterns of manufacturing job loss and non-manufacturing job gain (or, in a few cases, loss) that occurred in these areas. Through a set of case studies of eight metropolitan areas, it examines various policies and strategies by which government, business, and/or civic institutions sought to replace lost manufacturing jobs with new jobs in non-manufacturing industries. The project is being conducted in collaboration with the Brookings Institution, acting as a subcontractor to GWIPP.

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**PROJECT:** Trajectories of Immigrant Performance Over Time

**INVESTIGATOR:** Dylan Conger (GWIPP); Amy Ellen Schwartz, Leanna Stiefel (New York University)

**FUNDER:** Spencer Foundation

Despite the difficulties of learning a new language and new customs, prior research suggests that young immigrant children fare relatively well in U.S. public schools. Yet, very little research has carefully studied how immigrant children fare over time in school and how their performance trajectories are shaped by the schools they attend, the age upon which they enter the U.S., and other family and student attributes. This study carefully examines the performance trajectories of immigrant children in New York City public schools. Specifically, we are tracking several cohorts of immigrant and native-born students and comparing changes in their relative performance from elementary through high school. In addition to determining how their performance changes over time, we are exploring the effect of age upon entry—separately from the effect of length of residency—on children’s performance upon immigration and their trajectories over time. Finally, we distinguish among the foreign-born, identifying the multiple pathways that they take and the factors that determine those pathways. With this final analysis, we seek to identify the various peer groups that immigrant children assimilate to as they age and how their demographic and educational characteristics along with their schools influence these trajectories. Our research is aimed at informing New York City educators and educators across the nation facing growing immigrant populations.



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**PROJECT:** Etiology and Course of Depressive Symptoms in African American Adolescents

**INVESTIGATOR:** Sharon Lambert

**FUNDER:** National Institute of Mental Health

Adolescent depression is a significant public health problem associated with concurrent and later impairment in multiple domains, including interpersonal difficulties, academic and occupational problems, substance use, and suicidal behavior, as well as increased risk of depressive disorders and psychiatric comorbidity. To date, however, there have been few prospective longitudinal examinations of the course of depressive symptoms in adolescence, limiting our understanding of the etiology and course of depressive problems in youth and restricting the knowledge base available to inform the development of preventive interventions and health policies targeting adolescent depression. Moreover, the available research on adolescent depression has been conducted almost exclusively with middle class and Caucasian samples to the relative neglect of ethnically diverse samples.

Additionally, there has been relatively little attention to the role of contexts beyond the family in the emergence and maintenance of depressive symptoms. Therefore, this examines the longitudinal course of depressive symptoms in a community epidemiologically-defined sample of urban African American adolescents, and the role of the neighborhood context in the etiology of depressive symptoms in these adolescents. Multilevel and geostatistical models will be used to understand the effects of location on these adolescents' mental health adjustment, and inform the development of contextually relevant interventions. Implications of this work for public health policies regarding the content, timing, duration, and location of interventions for adolescent depression will be presented.

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**PROJECT:** School Finance Referenda and Housing Values

**INVESTIGATORS:** Richard Green, Pam Blumenthal, Garry Young, Meghan Salas, Kelly Brown, Jessica Menter

**FUNDER:** National Center for Real Estate Research

Housing values and change over time in these values are influenced by a variety of factors. There is a substantial and well-established literature that suggests that housing and property values are a function of the physical characteristics of the house and the land on which it sits, proximity to amenities and disamenities, the level and quality of local government services provided, and the level of property taxes collected to pay for these services. Within the context of government service provision and financing, local school quality and cost play a particularly important role in affecting house prices. A critical component to educational finance in the United States is the requirement that school-related financial arrangements must receive direct voter approval in most school districts. The referendum requirement applies most commonly to the sale of bonds for capital improvements, but extends well beyond bond issues. The results of school referenda have major consequence for house values in school districts, since both taxes and school quality are capitalized to a substantial extent into property values. Yet we know little about the outcomes and outcome trends of school finance referenda and we have little systematic evidence about the relationship between these referenda outcomes and housing values. The purpose of this project is to gather data on school finance referenda across the states going back to 1995 and then study the relationship between referenda outcomes and housing values.

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# POLICY RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM

The Policy Research Scholar program is a critical part of GWIPP's effort to encourage and facilitate public policy research at George Washington University. In an annual competition GW faculty submit proposals for policy-based research they hope to develop. Those selected are given the title of Policy Research Scholar and serve in that capacity for a one year period. Each Scholar is required to develop their project during the year and submit a proposal for external funding. GWIPP provides each Scholar with a variety of resources. These include \$8,000 for summer stipend or course releases. Additionally the GWIPP staff help the Scholars find identify potential funders, develop the proposals, construct budgets, navigate the human subjects review process, submit proposals, and administer the grants once funded.

There have been fifty Policy Research Scholars in the seven cohorts since the inception of the program. The most recent cohort began Fall 2007. Scholars have come from many departments within the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences and from all the campus Schools, Medicine excepted.

Scholars have worked on a wide range of policy-related projects, producing an exceptional body of research. For more information about GWIPP's Policy Research Scholar Program, consult the GWIPP website ([www.gwu.edu/~gwipp](http://www.gwu.edu/~gwipp)) or contact Garry Young at [youngG@gwu.edu](mailto:youngG@gwu.edu) or 202-994-6494.

## GWIPP RESEARCH CENTERS

### Center for Washington Area Studies

A multi-disciplinary university-wide research center whose purpose is to encourage, promote and engage in research related to Washington, D.C. and the Washington region. Its primary activities include:

- support of efforts by GW faculty to seek external funding for research on the Washington region or that includes the Washington region in more general research,
- support of research by GW faculty and students that is of relevance to the Washington area, and
- support for GW faculty seeking to incorporate the Washington region into their courses by maintaining and disseminating resource materials.

### State and Local Fiscal Policy Research Program

The staff of the State and Local Fiscal Policy Research Program engage in research on state and/or local tax and expenditure policy. The Program's research has included studies of fiscal disparities in metropolitan areas; the effect of changing to a site value only property tax on fiscal disparities; the impact of local government fiscal cutbacks on non-profit organizations in the Washington, DC area; the effect of state and local fiscal policy on local economic growth and development; and future trends affecting state and local fiscal condition. Funders have included The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; the Department of Housing and Urban Development; The Brookings Institution; and the National Center for Real Estate Research.

# POLICY RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROFILE

## Dylan Conger

By: Meghan Salas



Assistant Professor in the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration (since 2004), Dylan Conger was one of the eight 2006-2007 GWIPP Policy Research Scholars (PRS). Professor Conger focuses her research on social and education policy, with a particular emphasis on issues of equity with respect to race/ethnicity, nativity and poverty. She did her undergraduate work at the University of California-Berkeley, received her Masters degree from the Ford School at the University of Michigan, and received her PhD. from the Wagner School of Public Service at New York University.

Professor Conger credits the program as a “great opportunity to get funding to buy time to work on proposal development.” Another aspect of the PRS program that Dylan highlights is its brown bag series. During the school year the recipients meet on a regular basis to discuss grant proposals, provide feedback and to think ahead. “I liked the way the program is designed to make us think way in advance. It forces us to answer the question: what is your research agenda two years from now?”

Prof. Conger is currently working on three separate research projects; the proposals for two of the three were completed and funded during her PRS tenure. First, during the 2006-07 year, Dylan Conger was selected for the Changing Faces of America’s Children Young Scholars Program by the Foundation for Child Development. With support from the Foundation, Professor Conger will study how long it takes students to become English proficient and how the time to proficiency varies according to students’ background characteristics, the grade at which they enter school, and the type of English instruction they receive. Using longitudinal panels of young English language learners in the New York City public schools, she aims to provide the research, educational and advocacy communities with a more complete understanding of language learning trajectories.

Additionally, during the 2006-07 year, Dylan Conger received funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. She is working with colleagues Patrice Iatarola of Florida State University and Mark Long of the University of Washington to investigate the links between high school course-taking and secondary and post-secondary outcomes. Relying upon administrative data from the Florida Department of Education in the census of 8th through 12th grade public school students from 1998-2005, the study aims to inform policymakers and educators concerned about increases in the demand for skilled labor and disparities that exist in student achievement across the U.S. The study investigates the determinants of course-offerings across schools and course-taking within schools and the effects of course taking on educational outcomes. In particular, the researchers will focus on demographic and socioeconomic disparities to investigate the persistent gaps in achievement that exist between different racial and income groups.

Finally, Dylan Conger is continuing her investigation of the trajectories of immigrant performance over time with Amy Ellen Schwartz and Leanna Stiefel of New York University. The research is funded by the Spencer Foundation and is aimed to inform New York City educators and other U.S. educators facing growing immigrant populations. In particular, the research tracks New York City Public School students over time to investigate how schools, age upon entry to the U.S., family and student attributes may shape school performance trajectories of these students.

Meghan Salas is a Graduate Research Assistant with GWIPP. She received her BA from Kenyon College and is currently a PhD candidate at The George Washington University.

# RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROFILE

## Pamela Blumenthal

By: Olive Cox



Pam Blumenthal is a Research Assistant who has been working with GWIPP for more than two years. She is a PhD candidate with a concentration in social and urban policy. She has participated on research on the effect of state policy on the well-being of city residents and the causes of “weak cities.” She received her B.A. from Cornell University, her J.D. from University of Michigan Law School, and her MPP from George Washington University.

Yes, you read correctly she received her J.D. prior to coming to GW and was in fact practicing law at Hogan and Hartson. How does one transition from lawyer to full-time student? I set out to find the answer to these questions.

**Olive:** How do you make the transition from lawyer to full time student?

**Pam:** I admit that it was a difficult transition – primarily going from a position of expertise in one field to being a novice in a new field. But being back in school is so much fun that the adjustment was pretty quick. It helps to have a supportive husband who has already completed the PhD process, so he understands the challenges of grad school (and the importance of free food).

**Olive:** Why did you choose GWU? Would you recommend GWU’s PhD program?

**Pam:** If you want to work on housing policy, DC is the place to be. GW’s program offers two important elements: bright professors who have worked in the real world on policy issues, often having spent time in the government, and interesting students who bring a broad range of experiences to the classroom. The high quality of the students and professors, as well as the broad range of research being conducted, make it easy for me to recommend GW’s policy program.

**Olive:** What led you to GWIPP? What has been your experience working on GWIPP projects?

**Pam:** Hal Wolman guided me when I was trying to figure out what degree would help me best transition from law to housing policy. I wanted to work with him from the very beginning. When I started in the MPP program, I was able to work with Dr. Wolman, his co-investigator Ned Hill (at Cleveland State University) and a team of research assistants on a large project looking at the role of state policy on city well-being. It was a great team. We were doing case studies on cities in six states, and it was a lot of work, but really fun. That’s when I knew I was in the right place. I have worked on several projects since, with the general theme of better understanding what makes cities successful underlying all of them.

**Olive:** Tell me one thing that would wow me (personally or professionally).

**Pam:** I guess one of my greatest achievements was bicycling cross-country (from Seattle, WA to DC) the summer of 2006 as part of a small group. I don’t consider myself very athletic, but was able to complete the trip and make a few great friends – and I remained in great shape for at least two weeks afterwards.

**Olive:** When do you expect to earn your PhD?

**Pam:** June 2009

Olive Cox is Executive Aide, GWIPP. She received a BA from The George Washington University where she is currently pursuing an MTA.

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# WORTH MENTIONING

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## **President Knapp to Attend PRS Alumni Reception**

Newly inaugurated GW President Steven Knapp has accepted an invitation to meet with current and past Policy Research Scholars at a reception in January 2008. President Knapp has expressed keen interest in research, and this reception will provide a good opportunity for him to become acquainted with the research being pursued through GWIPP. The event will celebrate seven years of a successful and effective program aimed at helping members of the academic community to design and pursue sponsored research. The reception will be held in the City View Room of the 1957 E Street Building

## **Green Gives Talk**

**Richard Green**, the Director of the Center for Washington Area Studies (a unit within GWIPP) and the Oliver T. Carr Professor of Real Estate finance in the School of Business recently gave a paper on the Housing Finance Revolution at the 31st annual Economic Policy Symposium sponsored by the Federal Reserve and held at Jackson's Hole, Wyoming. Richard spoke immediately after a widely-covered talk by the Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke.

## **Lempert New Research Professor**

We would like to welcome Rick Lempert as the most recent GWIPP Research Professor. Rick is a sociologist and lawyer who was a Professor in both the Law School and the Department of Sociology at the University of Michigan and who, most recently, served as Division Director of the Division of Social and Economic Sciences at the National Science Foundation. Rick's interests lie at the intersection of social science and law. Much of his work applies social science research to legal issues such as the operation of juries, the use of capital punishment, and the use of statistical and social science evidence by courts.

## **Article Examines Prospects of Children**

Hal Wolman and Nancy Augustine are among the co-authors of the article, 'The Influence of Neighborhood Poverty During Childhood on Fertility, Education, and Earnings Outcomes', *Housing Studies*, 22:5 [September 2007], 723 - 751. The other authors of the paper are George Galster (Wayne State University), and Dave E. Marcotte and Marv Mandell (University of Maryland at Baltimore County).

## **Proceedings of Spring Conference to Be Published in early 2008**

A Conference on Urban and Regional Policy and Its Effects was held on March 29-30, 2007 in Washington, D.C. The conference was co-sponsored by GW's Institute of Public Policy and School of Public Policy and Public Administration, The Brookings Institution, and the Urban Institute. Papers presented at the conference are being prepared for publication by the Brookings Institution Press, to be available in early 2008. GWIPP Director Hal Wolman is co-editor of the volume, along with Margery A. Turner of the Urban Institute and Howard Wial of the Brookings Institution.

*Continued from Homeland Security p. 4*

as a result of the landing ban. The example also illustrates, however, that what can seem to be costs to one locality or region, are generally represented as shifts of resources from one locality or region to another and not an overall reduction of resources in the national economy. Therefore, the impact is often less relevant to the measurement of the social cost of such policies in a cost-benefit sense.

*Continued from Projects p. 7*

**PROJECT:** The Implications of High School Course Availability and Course-Taking for Achievement, Graduation, and Postsecondary Enrollment

**INVESTIGATORS:** Dylan Conger (GWIPP); Patrice Iatarola (Florida State University); Mark Long (University of Washington)

**FUNDER:** U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences

Responding to increases in the demand for skilled labor, persistent racial and income gaps in academic outcomes, and the higher relative performance of secondary students from other developed countries, U.S. policymakers and educators have turned their attention, once again, towards high school curriculum. To inform this effort, our study identifies the determinants of course-offerings across schools and course-taking within schools, and the effects of course-taking on outcomes at multiple stages of the students' high school and postsecondary careers. We seek primarily to estimate: 1) the share of socioeconomic and demographic disparities in course-taking that can be attributed to variation across schools in their course offerings versus variation in course-taking among students within schools; and 2) the share of socioeconomic and demographic disparities in 10th grade test scores, four-year graduation rates, and enrollment rates in postsecondary institutions that can be attributed to differential returns to course-taking, differential course-taking within schools, and differential course offerings across schools. The research relies on administrative data from the Florida Department of Education on the census of 8th through 12th grade public school students (and their schools) from 1998 to 2005.

#####

**PROJECT:** The District of Columbia - Ten Years after the 1997 Revitalization Act

**INVESTIGATORS:** Julia Friedman and Kelly Brown

**FUNDER:** Our Nation's Capital

The federal "policy-climate" of the District of Columbia has changed a great deal in the last ten years. Many changes are shared by all US cities while other changes are specific to D.C. and reveal the federal government's actions to help stabilize the local governance and the economy of the nation's capital. For D.C. and other U.S. cities, the cumulative impact is a major change in budgetary and programmatic needs. The purpose of this project is to update information on changes in the Federal/District Fiscal Relationship in the 10 years since the Congress passed National Capital Revitalization Act in 1997.

*Continued from Blumenthal p. 10*

**Olive:** What's next for you?

**Pam:** I'm really looking forward to completing my PhD so I can begin doing the work that I went back to school to learn to do - work on developing affordable housing policy.

After talking with Pam, it's easy to understand why Hal Wolman, Director, GWIPP, says she is a "joy to work with". With intelligence, and experienced judgment - no doubt from her educational background and practicing law - Pam Blumenthal and GWIPP share a symbiotic relationship.

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