2023/2024

YEAR IN REVIEW







KLAU INSTITUTE
FOR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS
KEOUGH SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS



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Dear Friends,

I am delighted to share this Year in Review with you. The Klau Institute's continued growth is a testament to both the need and hunger for its leadership role on campus with respect to civil and human rights education and research. Three major accomplishments from this last academic year include: enhanced academic programming, a growing research profile, and the hiring of new staff.

We graduated 15 students this year from our academic programs and served well over 100 student affiliates, providing courses, educational events, and funding for research, internships, and experiential learning. We also launched the new Klau Institute for Civil and Human Rights Leadership Fellows Program, funded in part by a generous gift from Thomas and Michelle Melsheimer. An inaugural cohort of top undergraduate students was selected to work on civil and human rights-related research and experiential learning with local community partners during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Our research profile continues to grow. The International Race and Rights Lab has advanced the cutting-edge work of Professor Zoltán Búzás on the intersection of racism, international politics, and human rights. The Lab also hosted a second annual works-in-progress conference for emerging scholars, enhancing the Lab's reputation as a key partner for scholars of race and international politics. In addition, we launched a new Migration Initiative which will spearhead research, experiential learning, and policy initiatives related to migration.

This summer saw some leadership transitions at the Klau Institute. Inaugural Associate Director Dory Mitros Durham was promoted to Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs in the Keough School of Global Affairs. The Institute hired Arlene F. Montevecchio to serve as the new Associate Director. Montevecchio, most recently the Director of Notre Dame's Gender Relations Center, is an expert in Catholic Social Teaching with a Master of Theological Studies from Harvard University. We have also welcomed Roqia Samim as the Migration Initiative's program director for research and policy. It is a true gift to welcome these women to the Klau Institute Team.

All in all, it has been a year of exciting growth. Thank you, to each of you reading this, for supporting the Klau Institute. It is a privilege to serve the Notre Dame community by advancing education and research on civil and human rights.

In Notre Dame,

Jennifer Mason McAward

Jennifer Mason McAward
Director and Associate Professor of Law



Academics

Student Affiliates

Featured Student Q&A



Chaya Figueroa is a 2024 graduate of Notre Dame with majors in Sociology and Global Affairs. She is active in the Klau Institute as a student affiliate.

You're very active on campus, from belonging to numerous student organizations to taking on a supplementary major. What has that level of involvement meant to you?

Being a part of QuestBridge, Shades of Ebony, and the Black Student Association has allowed me to embrace my identity while being here at Notre Dame. As a person of color and first generation, low-income student, it can be easy to feel isolated at a predominantly white institution, so I was glad to have these clubs to fall back on for camaraderie and support. I joined the board for these clubs to provide that same comfort to others like me.

Being in the Keough School of Global Affairs for a supplementary major has allowed me to learn more about my interest in international politics and human rights. I enjoy taking classes I probably would have never taken as a Sociology major, like International Economics for example.

Human rights is an important subject for you. How have you explored that in your studies?

I first became interested in human rights issues in 2020 after the Mai Kadra massacre in Tigray, Ethiopia. Since then, I've spent the past 3 years researching and studying rebellion, war, and genocide and how they affect innocent civilians.

I interned at the Karayanni Law Firm while in Greece, which is an international law firm that specializes in multiple services including criminal law. While there, I researched how the Rwandan Civil War/ genocide and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda can be applied to determine the crimes and appropriate penalties for the Tigray War/ genocide. I loved my time at the firm because it was great being able to hear about what I've been interested in from the perspective of an international lawyer, as well as get a taste of being one myself.

You're also a student researcher in the International Race and Rights Lab.

Yes. I've been researching relations between the NAACP and Japan, China, and Russia. The purpose of this research is to find how civil rights advocates have decided on/ against working with countries that have promoted similar values in the past but don't have the best relationship with the United States. I've learned a lot about how the civil rights movement and international relations like the Cold War heavily influenced each other, because before I thought the two events just ran parallel to each other on the timeline.

What are your hopes for a career after Notre Dame?

I want to be able to actively partake in strengthening international law and creating policies to help groups like the Tigray people get the justice and attention deserved. I hope to help condemn war crimes and penalize the actors of genocide across the globe but especially in Ethiopia, which has fallen into a cycle of impunity.

Minor in Civil and Human Rights

Current Minors in Civil and Human Rights

In its second year, our minor in civil and human rights grew from 13 students to 18 students. These students come from a wide range of primary majors, and we are delighted to support their formal studies in civil and human rights.

Nifemi Aluko
Psychology

Courtney Anderson-Ferguson
Sociology

Annie Behm
Biological Studies

Veronica Bofah
Global Affairs

Mia Chetalo
Global Affairs

Annelise Demers
Global Affairs

Ali Dogue
American Studies and Latino Studies

Mariana Esparza Torres
Political Science

Raleigh Kuipers
Global Affairs and Spanish

Kristen Lemus
Political Science

Maddie Long
Sociology and History

Aaliah Magee
Business Analytics

Grainne Malone
Anthropology and Peace Studies

Clodagh McEvoy-Johnston
Global Affairs and Peace Studies

Klyrissa Porter
Sociology

Joshua Talache-Wheat
Philosophy

Guadalupe Vallejo Delgado
American Studies and Latino Studies

Isabelle Wilson
Global Affairs and Philosophy

2024 Graduates

The Klau Institute was proud to celebrate the graduation of two undergraduate students who minored in civil and human rights and 13 undergraduate students who concentrated in civil and human rights within the Keough School's supplementary major in global affairs.

MINOR IN CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Sonya Baumgardt
Political Science

Rachel Hartmann
Political Science

CONCENTRATION IN CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Miranda Colon
Global Affairs and Sociology

Briana Chappell
Global Affairs and Political Science

Jensen Enterman
Global Affairs and Economics

Chaya Figueroa
Global Affairs and Sociology

Diego Gerena
Global Affairs and Theology

Elizabeth Gonzalez
Global Affairs and Political Science

Olivia Grandpre
Global Affairs and Sociology

Abigail Lamm
Global Affairs and Political Science

Kathleen McCurrie
Global Affairs and Finance

Gannat Mukhtar
Global Affairs and American Studies

Climary Sanchez Marmolejo
Global Affairs and Political Science

Gabrielle Spontak
Global Affairs and Greek and Roman Civilization

Irasema Trujillo
Global Affairs and Political Science

FEATURED COURSE

Racial Justice in America



During the Spring semester, the Klau Institute collaborated with the Center for Social Concerns to offer a new course, "Racial Justice in America." This course focused on the historical and current impact of racial injustice and emphasized the urgency of racial justice work today. It was taught by Klau's visiting associate professor, William Tobin, and Suzanne Shanahan, the Leo and Arlene Hawk Executive Director of the Center for Social Concerns.

During Spring Break, the course took students on a road trip to explore how narratives about the struggle for racial justice shape our current efforts and how museums and historical landmarks can influence these narratives.

The trip included visits to the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, and the home of Medgar Evers in Jackson, Mississippi. Students toured museums, visited plantations, and followed in the footsteps of civil rights icons like John Lewis by walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama. They were required to take photos and write daily reflections on topics such as the nature of social change.

"The trip touched the students because of the rawness of it — seeing information about lynchings, seeing a sugar plantation where conditions were horrific," Tobin said. "But we also wanted them to take a step back and think analytically about the things they were seeing in policy terms and how to put this in context beyond themselves. After walking the streets of Birmingham and seeing in a vivid way how sustained protest by young people led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, students in the course were asked to develop their own theory of how social change happens."

2023 Rita Bahr Scholars

The Klau Institute is proud to administer the Rita Bahr Cari Memorial Fund, which supports human rights lawyers enrolled in the L.L.M. Program in International Human Rights Law.



Valentina Salazar Rivera, a Colombian lawyer interested in criminal justice reform.



Felipe Lyon Errazuriz, a Chilean lawyer and professor, serving since 2021 as constitutional law and legal theory professor at the Universidad San Sebastian, in Santiago.



Andres Succar Cuellar, a senior Colombian lawyer with 14 years of legal experience.



Ángel Muñoz Carpintero, a Honduran human rights lawyer and an associate human rights officer (Rule of Law and Accountability Unit) at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Honduras.

Klau Institute Summer Fellows

The Klau Institute provides financial support to Notre Dame law students working in public interest organizations that promote civil or human rights. In its seventh year, the program expanded to support more students than ever before.



Margot Calmar
Second year law student
Margot served at Sanford Heisler Sharp, a leading civil rights firm.



Tristan Mullen
Second year law student
Tristan worked with the ACLU of Georgia's Southern Legal Internship Program.



Varun Cidambi
First year law student
Varun served with Notre Dame's Fitzgerald Institute for Real Estate.



Nickki Rafferty
First year law student
Nicki worked with New Hampshire Legal Assistance.



Cecilia Honan
Second year law student
Cecilia worked at the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Attorneys for Children Unit.



Tyson Weeks
First year law student
Tyson worked at the Fairfax County Public Defender Office.



Adam Miller
Second year law student
Adam worked with the ACLU of Alaska.

Student Funding for Civil and Human Rights Projects

The Klau Institute was proud to provide support to students for research, professional development, and experiential learning opportunities.

Anivesh Bharadwaj *served internships at UN OSC-SEA and World Bank.*

Mayra Ortiz Ocana *presented at a human rights violations prosecuting conditions conference at the Central American Politics Consortium.*

Laura Lopez-Perez *attended a conference on victims and transitional justice at Ghent University in Belgium.*

Mary Quirk *served as an intern at a U.S. non-profit, Sycamore Farm, for victims of trafficking.*

Pavithra Rajendran *presented her research on the relationship between crimes against humanity and its adverse effects on the environment at a conference at the Vermont Law & Graduate School.*

Nicolas Buitrago Rey *served as an intern at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.*

Laura Suarez Rodriguez *took courses on conflict analysis, strategic planning for peacemaking, and mediation at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).*



Initiatives

International Race and Rights Lab



The International Race and Rights lab made significant strides in its cutting-edge research at the intersection of human rights and racial issues on a global scale. The team expanded in 2023-2024, bringing on board seven student research assistants, including four new students. This infusion of fresh perspectives and energy was instrumental in driving the projects forward.

One of the most tangible outcomes of the recent work is the lab's inaugural publication, "Race, Shaming, and International Human Rights," co-authored by Klau core faculty and Associate Professor of Global Affairs Zoltán Búzás and Lotem Bassan-Nygate, Assistant Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. This groundbreaking paper has been accepted for publication by the *American Journal of Political Science*, a prestigious journal with a mere six percent acceptance rate. According to various rankings, this journal is consistently listed among the top two out of approximately 200 political science journals, underscoring the significance and quality of its published research.

In addition to the publishing achievements, the lab hosted two successful workshops in May 2024. These workshops attracted considerable interest, with 56 submissions received. From those, 18 papers involving 24 authors (some submissions were co-authored) were selected. The workshops featured a diverse group of 30 participants, including both authors and discussants. The authors were primarily junior scholars, while the discussants were more established figures in the field, providing a rich mix of insights and expertise.

These events and publications reflect the Klau Institute's commitment to advancing understanding and fostering dialogue on crucial human rights and racial issues in the global context.


KLAU INSTITUTE
FOR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS
EDUCATE
INQUIRE
ENGAGE

Klau Institute for Civil and Human Rights Leadership Fellows Program

The Klau Institute Civil and Human Rights Leadership Fellows Program was launched in the spring of 2024 to enrich undergraduate education by providing opportunities for students to experience the deep connection between human dignity and civil and human rights.

The Klau Institute's new two-year experiential program is designed for rising sophomores and juniors with a deep interest in civil and human rights. Each cohort of students will immerse themselves in the life of the Klau Institute, building community with one another, engaging with Klau Institute faculty fellows, and participating in a curated experiential learning opportunity with local organizations. The students will begin their experiential learning in the fall of 2024.

The Leadership Fellows Program is funded in part by a generous gift from Thomas and Michelle Melsheimer.

2024 INAUGURAL KLAU LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

Matthew Amante
Political Science

Veronica Bofah
Global Affairs and Spanish

Mia Chetalo
Global Affairs

Annelise Demers
Global Affairs

Alexandra Gonzalez-Amaro
Political Science and Latino Studies

Amelia Hatfield
Political Science

Emi Kartsonas
Neuroscience and Behavior

Connor Kaufmann
History

Daniel Mooney
Global Affairs and International Economics

Manouny Ouatara
Political Science

JD Sniegocki
Global Affairs and Environmental Science

Joshua Talache-Wheat
Philosophy

Izabella Vasquez
Political Science

Migration Initiative Takes Critical Step Forward



Amid increasing global mass displacements and humanitarian crises, the Klau Institute launched a new initiative on migration in 2024. The initiative seeks to expand and strengthen Notre Dame's multi-faceted work on international migration. It will support faculty research and policy engagement and serve students through curricular offerings and experiential learning opportunities. Additionally, it aspires to be a go-to source of public education and understanding on migration-related issues by expanding Notre Dame's strong working relationships with migrant- and refugee-serving institutions, programs, and ministries. Much of the groundwork for this initiative was completed by Donald Kerwin, former executive director of the Center for Migration Studies of New York. Kerwin served as a consultant to the Klau Institute, the Kroc Institute, and the Keough School of Global Affairs to help launch the migration initiative.

In April, eighteen scholars and practitioners from Notre Dame and across the U.S., along with representatives of the Catholic Church, met for a full day at the Keough School of Global Affairs to discuss how Notre Dame can best contribute its expertise and resources. In a public event held at the conclusion of the workshop, Bishop Mark Seitz, Father Fabio Baggio, and Erin Corcoran, shed light on the priorities that drive the migration effort. The conversation was led by Fr. Daniel Groody, vice president and associate provost for undergraduate education, an internationally recognized leader in the theology of migration. The priorities outlined included the importance of sharing individual migrant stories to inform policy and change, legislators' responsibility to consider moral values and a higher calling beyond constituent desires, and addressing the primary causes of migration.

With Voices True



With Voices True is an initiative of the Klau Institute for Civil and Human Rights. It is an archive of personal narratives on race, collected through interviews with members of the Notre Dame community. This initiative is operationalized entirely by students. They conduct interviews, transcribe audio recordings, and code data to be stored in the university's Notre Dame Archives. In Fall 2023, we hired three student employees for the initiative. These students collected and processed a total of 10 interviews from both students and faculty. Excerpts of these interviews were shared with the broader Notre Dame community.

Know Your Rights

In 2023-2024, the Klau Institute began to develop a civil rights curriculum that could be taken into the local community to enhance democratic participation among citizens. Modules focus on voting rights, tenants' rights, free speech rights, and criminal justice rights. The Institute is working with select community partners to develop a plan for presenting these modules.



Events

FEATURED EVENT

The Future of Affirmative Action



In November 2023, author and policy fellow Richard Kahlenberg visited campus to discuss the future of affirmative action following the recent Supreme Court ruling that declared race-based admissions policies unconstitutional. Kahlenberg, who served as an expert witness in the *Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. Harvard* and *SFFA v. University of North Carolina* cases, explored the origins of affirmative action, noting its initial focus on addressing economic disadvantage, a cause championed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Kahlenberg highlighted disparities in college admissions advantages, with underrepresented minorities, athletes, and legacy students receiving significant boosts, while economically disadvantaged students benefited far less. He suggested that universities could pursue race-neutral admissions strategies, such as prioritizing low-socioeconomic status students, to maintain diversity without relying on race.

The discussion, moderated by Klau Institute's director, Jennifer Mason McAward, also touched on the potential for religious universities like Notre Dame to seek racial diversity within their mission. Kahlenberg emphasized the need to address economic inequalities in admissions, suggesting that legacy preferences might decline following the Court's decision. The event was hosted by the Klau Institute for Civil and Human Rights and the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study.



FEATURED SPEAKER

Jeff Wiltse on Racial Disparities in Drowning Rates

As part of the Klau Institute's fall speaker series, "Building an Anti-Racist Vocabulary," University of Montana history professor Jeff Wiltse discussed the significant correlation between race and drowning on October 1.

Wiltse began his talk by recounting a tragic 2010 accident in Shreveport, Louisiana, where 15-year-old Dekendrix Warner, unable to swim, drowned. In a desperate attempt to save him, six of his siblings and cousins, who also couldn't swim, drowned as well. This incident highlighted the stark racial disparity in drowning rates in the United States. "Black Americans are far more likely to drown than white Americans," Wiltse noted, attributing this disparity primarily to low swimming proficiency. According to a 2010 USA Swimming study, only 31% of Black children and teenagers could swim proficiently, compared to 58% of their white counterparts.

Wiltse emphasized that this disparity is not due to any inherent physical differences but is rooted in social and cultural factors. Historically, Black Americans faced systematic racial segregation and exclusion from public swimming pools, which severely limited their access to swimming facilities and lessons. In the early 20th century, public swimming pools became central to community life, yet Black Americans were systematically discriminated against and excluded from these spaces. The segregation intensified in the 1920s and 1930s, and despite the popularity of swimming, Black Americans had significantly less access than whites. This exclusion continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s, affecting Black Americans' swimming proficiency and contributing to the ongoing disparity.

According to a 2010 USA Swimming study, only 31% of Black children and teenagers could swim proficiently, compared to 58% of their white counterparts.

2010 USA Swimming study

Wiltse's lecture underscored the historical roots of this issue and highlighted the need for addressing racial inequalities in access to swimming education and facilities. His insights contribute to the broader conversation on building an anti-racist society, aligning with the Klau Institute's mission.

LECTURE SERIES

Building an Anti-Racist Vocabulary

The fourth year of our popular lecture series drew upon topics including how Catholic institutions navigate issues of race, disparities in the American criminal justice system, and the higher rates of cancer and other adverse health outcomes for Black Americans.

THIS YEAR'S SPEAKERS INCLUDED:

Vincent Rougeau
President of the College of the Holy Cross

Rachel Swarns
Journalist, author and associate professor of Journalism at New York University
Slavery and the American Catholic Church

Felix Owusu
Postdoctoral research fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School
Criminal Justice Disparities

Jeff Wiltse
Professor of history at the University of Montana
Race and Drowning

Devin Lowell and Pam Spees
Tulane Environmental Law Clinic; Center for Constitutional Rights
Cancer Alley

Angel Hsu
Assistant professor of public policy at the University of North Carolina and director of the Data-Driven EnviroLab
Climate Inequality

Kamilah Moore
Reparatory justice scholar and a member of the California Reparations Task Force
Reparations

Jennifer Guglielmo
Associate professor of history at Smith College
Race as a Social Construct

Jamil Scott
Assistant professor of political science at Georgetown University
Political Participation

Sonja Lanehart
Professor of linguistics at the University of Arizona
Oxford Dictionary of African American English

Human Rights Lunch and Learn Talks

The Human Rights LL.M. students enrich our Notre Dame community in many ways during their year on campus. These students collaborate with the Klau Institute to offer a series of lunch-and-learn talks to educate our community about the human rights conditions in their countries of origin.

THIS YEAR, THE FOLLOWING TALKS WERE OFFERED:

Valentina Salazar Rivera and Andres Succar Cuellar
Colombia's ceasefire: challenges in the use of international humanitarian and human rights law

Nikola Donev
Minority Rights in Macedonia

Nourhan Fahmy
Egypt's increased volatility amid ongoing repression and war on its borders

Angel Munoz Carpintero
Human Rights in Honduras

Felipe Lyon Errazuriz
Human Rights in Chile

Additional Events



17 Years Stolen: Obie Anthony's Story (Co-sponsored)

75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Co-sponsored)

Affirmative Action Panel featuring Professors Jennifer Mason McAward, Fr. Bob Dowd, and Anna Haskins

All We Have is the Truth (Co-sponsored)

Breakfast with Sr. Helen Prejean: Death Penalty & the Death of Innocents

Civil & Human Rights Graduation Luncheon

Evangelical Influence on Human Rights and US Foreign Relations

Migration and Catholic Social Teaching: Welcome, Protect, Promote, and Integrate

Klau Welcome Event

Lunch with Nobel Laureate Maria Ressa

Looking Towards Earth Day: Care for our Common Home from Youth and Multifaith Voices (Co-sponsored)

Movie Night: *BlacKkKlansman*

Movie Night: *Prosecuting Evil: The Extraordinary World of Ben Ferencz*

Native American Heritage Month Dance and Drum Performance (Co-sponsored)

Patriarchy, Suppressed Speech, and Corporate Crime (Co-sponsored)

Toward Effective Reparations: A Discussion on Human Rights, Climate Change, and International Development (Co-sponsored)

The Escalating Crisis in Haiti: What is Needed from a Humanitarian and Human Rights Perspective (Co-sponsored)



People

Faculty Fellows

Michael Addo
Professor of Law and Director, London Law Programme

Ellis Adjei Adams
Assistant Professor of Geography and Environmental Policy

Steven Alvarado
Assistant Professor of Sociology

Zoltán Búzás
Associate Professor of Global Affairs

Peter Cajka
Assistant Teaching Professor, Director of American Undergraduate Studies, Department of American Studies

Paolo Carozza
Professor of Law, Affiliated/Concurrent Faculty, Department of Political Science

Erin Corcoran
Associate Teaching Professor and Executive Director, Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies

David Cortez
Assistant Professor of Political Science

Diane Desierto
Professor of Law and Global Affairs, Faculty Director, LL.M. Program in Human Rights

John Duffy
Professor of English

Bernard Forjwuor
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Africana Studies

Jimmy Gurulé
Professor of Law

Matthew Hall
Professor of Political Science

Anna Haskins
Andrew V. Tackes Associate Professor of Sociology

Julia Kowalski
Assistant Professor of Global Affairs

David Lantigua
Associate Professor of Moral Theology/Christian Ethics

Maria McKenna
Associate Professor of the Practice, Department of Africana Studies Education, Schooling, & Society Program

Daniel Miller
Associate Professor of Environmental Policy

Ernest Morrell
Professor of English

Aníbal Pérez-Liñán
Director, Kellogg Institute for International Studies, Professor of Political Science and Global Affairs

Margaret Pfeil
Associate Teaching Professor, Moral Theology/Christian Ethics

Emilia Justyna Powell
Associate Professor of Political Science, Concurrent Associate Professor of Law

Gwendolyn Purifoye
Assistant Professor of Racial Justice and Conflict Transformation, Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies

Mark Sanders
Director, Initiative on Race and Resilience, Professor of English and Africana Studies

Guillermo Trejo
Associate Professor of Political Science

Francisco Urbina
Associate Professor of Law

Ernesto Verdeja
Associate Professor of Political Science, Faculty, Center for the Study of Social Movements and Social Change

Sophie White
Professor of American Studies

Christina Wolbrecht
Professor of Political Science

Calvin Zimmermann
Assistant Professor of Sociology



FACULTY FELLOW PROFILE

Steven Alvarado

Steven Alvarado is an assistant professor of sociology and faculty fellow at the Klau Institute. His research and teaching centers on how neighborhood disadvantage impinges on well-being across the life course, racial and ethnic inequality in education, the multigenerational structure of inequality, and policies that can potentially alleviate inequality. Using quantitative methods and federally restricted longitudinal data sets, Alvarado accounts for how inequality manifests through the unequal distribution of resources across racial and ethnic groups in schools and neighborhoods.

Tell us a little about your early academic formation. What led you to a particular interest in the study of race and inequality?

When I arrived in Berkeley for my first year, I was completely overwhelmed by the towering academic weight of the place. However, I quickly found an intellectual home in the sociology courses I took my freshman year. What hooked me was the fact that there was a tradition of research and inquiry into topics that touched on my lived experience such as immigration, urban poverty, racism, and educational marginalization. From there, I was hooked.

You received funding from the Klau Institute to help with a study of neighborhood disadvantage that requires the study of federally restricted data. What are the challenges and benefits of this kind of research?

The challenges are many. First, there is a steep financial cost to accessing these data – about $7,500 per year plus travel costs and time away from home. However, the benefits are also quite significant. To date, I am the only researcher in the world who is able to draw upon these restricted data – from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – to make discoveries about the social world that would have otherwise gone unnoticed by scholars.

In general terms, have there been any major surprises as you've studied the data, or has it largely verified your working assumptions?

I recently published a paper with a former graduate student at Cornell that demonstrated the limited returns to neighborhood mobility for Black Americans. In short, we found that Black Americans who grew up in "good" neighborhoods did not reap any advantage in terms of adult income compared to Black Americans who grew up in "bad" neighborhoods. The working assumption, prior to our paper, had been that moving Black residents out of socioeconomically distressed neighborhoods would lead to long-term economic gains over the life course. However, our research suggests that this is not enough. Structural racism in the labor market is likely to undercut the benefits that come from moving to a higher socioeconomic neighborhood for Black Americans.

The connection you draw between economic opportunity and educational opportunity – and human flourishing in general – might be particularly relevant in light of recent Supreme Court decisions regarding affirmative action. Do you see your work contributing to that conversation?

Absolutely. For the past 60 years, much of the public discussion about affirmative action's role in college admissions has centered around individual's physical traits (race/ethnicity in this case) and has even recently spilled over to topics such as legacy admissions and athletic prowess. However, I believe that shifting our thinking about affirmative action to a place-based model may have the power to satisfy almost everyone. Specifically, some recent analyses I have conducted on decades of federally restricted data demonstrates that using neighborhood socioeconomic status, instead of race or ethnicity, can yield about the same amount or racial and ethnic diversity in college admissions as was the case under affirmative action. This, sadly, is due to the fact that our residential landscape is marked by rigid neighborhood segregation by race, ethnicity, and income. This neighborhood approach should satisfy individuals who both lamented and celebrated the end of affirmative action because it produces similar levels of diversity and is not based on the phenotypic attributes of individuals.

Faculty Advisory Committee



Zoltán Búzás
Associate Professor
of Global Affairs



Anna Haskins
Andrew V. Tackes Associate
Professor of Sociology



Diane Desierto
Professor of Law and Global Affairs,
Faculty Director, L.L.M Program
in Human Rights Law



Christina Wolbrecht
Professor of Political Science

Klau Institute Staff



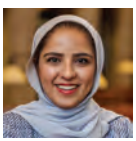
Jennifer Mason McAward
Director and Associate Professor of Law



Kevin Fye
Communications Program Manager



Dory Mitros Durham
Associate Director and
Associate Teaching Professor



Roqia Samim
Program Director, Research and Policy



Erica Loding
Program Manager



William Tobin
Visiting Associate Professor

Klau Institute Student Staff

Building an Anti-Racist Vocabulary
Abigail Lamm

Know Your Rights
Annad Khraisat

With Voices True
Sonya Baumgardt
Annette Lee
Alexa Mulroe

International Race and Rights Lab
Adam Akan
Ethan Chiang
Theo Daniel
Chaya Figueroa
Katherine Gottemoller
Abigail Lamm
Theresa O'Connor
Matthew Ruff
Gabrielle Spontak

Advisory Board



Kevin Klau
Co-chair; Executive Director, Friends of the University of Notre Dame, Inc.



Erin Klau
Co-chair



Sunny Hostin
Senior Legal Correspondent and Analyst, ABC News



Walter Jean-Jacques
Assistant General Counsel, National Urban League



Derrick Johnson
Agiliti Health, Inc.



Thomas Melsheimer
Dallas Managing Partner, Winston & Strawn



Carol Pier
Managing Director, International Labor, IMPAQ International



Tim Rastello
Law Firm of Timothy Rastello, LLC



Sam Walker
Executive in Residence, Office of the Colorado Attorney General



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