

EAMON GEARY



Eamon Geary has spent the last 10 years in the Pittsburgh-region, nationally, and internationally, to drive sustainable development and programs while working to curb greenhouse emissions.

After graduating from Allegheny College in 2005 with a degree in Environmental Policy, he joined the Pittsburgh regional non-profit, Green Building Alliance (GBA), to promote sustainable building design and construction through the green building rating system, LEED. Projects pursuing LEED certification earn points across several areas that address sustainability issues. LEED-certified buildings are resource efficient, use less water and energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As an added bonus, they save money.

During his time with GBA, Mr. Geary drafted the first green building legislation for the City of Pittsburgh and worked with (then) Councilmember Bill Peduto to educate city officials prior to the City Council vote and official adoption. Building off this success, Mr. Geary managed the Pittsburgh Climate Initiative which worked with a city task force and four sub-groups to develop a comprehensive carbon reduction strategy for the municipal, business, community, and higher-education sectors of the City of Pittsburgh

In 2008, Mr. Geary joined the international NGO, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, as a Program Officer. He developed a national-level sustainability initiative in the City of Cleveland, Denver, and Pittsburgh to assist with the successful implementation of measures to achieve their greenhouse gas emission-reduction goals.

After half a decade of non-profit work, Mr. Geary accepted a position as Manager for Construction Sustainability with the Pittsburgh region's largest engineering firm, Michael Baker International, where he was responsible for overseeing the sustainable design elements of Baker's architectural projects. During his time with Baker, he supervised over 100 LEED construction projects, including 3 platinum certifications – awarded for the highest level of sustainable construction. Most project were military and varied from machine gun ranges, to intelligence gathering facilities, and even a Northern Warfare Training Center where soldiers are trained to handle a winter climate even harsher than Pittsburgh's.

In 2016, Mr. Geary started his own consulting firm and worked freelance in order to attend the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh. He finds the freedom of being your own boss to be both empowering and terrifying, and secretly aspires to return to a traditional form of employment after completing his master's degree.



Hantian (Yvonne) Geng
MID-Governance of International Public Management
GSPIA, University of Pittsburgh

Born and raised in Nanning, a small city located in a subtropical area of Southern China, Hantian spent her time exploring a bigger world with a strong curiosity.

In 2015, Hantian graduated from Tianjin Foreign Studies University with a BA in English Studies major in English Translation & Interpretation. During four years as an undergraduate, she firstly volunteered at Tongzhizhou Center for Autistic Children, and then, with a friend, founded a student organization called Starlight Volunteer Group. They paid weekly visits to autistic children from 2011 to 2015, organizing charity sales and info-sessions about autism in Tianjin, China. And they were awarded the Tianjin Excellent Volunteer Group (2013) and the Silver Award of "National Chinese Youth Voluntary Project (2014)".

At the same time, the passion to communicate with more people drove Hantian to join English Debate Society in campus and later serve as the president. In 2014, with 10-15 members, they organized a college debate with Standard Chartered Bank (Tianjin Branch) and an Advanced British Parliamentary Debate Workshop with Singapore debaters. They not only provided trainings about critical-thinking and public speaking, but also offered a discussion platform for those students who were interested in international affairs, and cohered the small debating society with community in Tianjin and even international area by sharing perspiration and persistence.

Over undergraduate studies, Hantian found her enthusiasm in serving developing world and eagerness to learn more about international affairs. After graduation, Hantian became a GSPIA and began a new journey in Pittsburgh, studying International Development and Governance. In 2016, internship at Stimson Center with South Asia and Nonproliferation team exposed Hantian to a broader area with Pakistan and India, two important but unfamiliar neighbors to her; and further inspired her to jump out of the box, learning and understanding socioeconomic and security issues in regions like South Asia, Southeastern Asia, and even Africa now and in the future.

In her free time, Hantian enjoys traveling, reading novels (Lord of The Rings, Harry Potter, and Game of Thrones), listening to Deutsche and Austrian Musicals (Elizabeth, Mozart!, Dracula, and Tanz der Vampire), and watching Christopher Nolan's movies. Hantian is also a soft-drink/fruit/food lover. Her favorites include Bubble Tea, Milk Shake, Papaya, Mango, Paella, Curry, Sushi, Hot Pot, and Cantonese Dim Sum.

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Jamie Piotrowski is a Pittsburgh native from Carrick. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Waynesburg University in 2014. After exiting college Jamie worked as a refugee resettlement case worker at two local agencies and for a short time worked in foster care before returning to Pitt for her Master's in Social Work and International Development.

Jamie Participated in Cross Country and Track in undergrad and has since completed 3 marathons and 1 half marathon to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Jamie is interested in alleviating poverty and promoting social justice through policy and involved community planning and development.

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Courtney Smalt



Courtney is a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh, currently pursuing two masters degrees. She will be graduating in the spring of 2019 with a Masters of International Development with a focus in non-governmental agencies and civil society and a Masters of Public Health with a focus in behavioral and community health sciences. Courtney holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Houghton College in Intercultural Studies, with a concentration in missions and a minor in psychology.

Courtney is currently working for the University of Pittsburgh as an Office Assistant in the Epidemiology department. Last year she worked as a nursing assistant at Cayuga Medical Center. She has also worked as a teaching assistant, tutor, and camp counselor. In the fall of 2013 Courtney interned at Jericho Road Community Health Center in Buffalo, New York. She also studied development, public health, and Spanish during her time abroad in Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Tanzania.

Courtney plans to work for an NGO or INGO in the future helping to promote community health and well-being serving underdeveloped and vulnerable populations. Her specific focus is in food security and nutrition. Courtney long-term career goal is to become a Public Health Advisor at the CDC.

AISHWARYA SASI KUMAR

MPA Candidate, Governance and International Public Management

Aishwarya graduated from the Center for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) University, Ahmedabad, India with a degree in Urban Planning in May 2016. She actively participated in debates and discussions on governance and planning which made her curious to know how policies are formed and implemented through the different levels of the government. In 2014, she represented her University as a student delegate for an International Conference on Geospatial Data Systems at Wuhan University in China. Here she attended several seminars and worked with students from all over the world and presented the research they did. The entire experience made her realize the importance of studying abroad and inspired her to pursue her further education outside her home country.



As an Urban Planner, she has seen the governance structure especially at the local level as the coursework mandated this. This knowledge was further enhanced when she went to the industrial town of Vapi in Western India for her internship. Once rated to be one of the most polluted cities in the world, the industrial setting of the place has changed considerably mainly due to the efforts of the local businessmen, the local authority, and organizations with focus on international development and environmental protection such as GIZ. During her last two semesters, she started working on her thesis project which was aimed at understanding the governance issues in small cities of India.

Aishwarya is a very sensitive and empathetic individual, during her undergraduate studies she saw the plight of underprivileged children in terms of living conditions and level of 'good' education. This motivated her to become a tutor with a national NGO called Aasmaan Foundation. She helped the kids with school work and held workshops about sanitation for young girls. She enjoyed teaching children of different age groups, especially the younger ones as she understood the importance of each conversation she had and how it could affect/carve their sharp minds.

As a single child going away from her home to a foreign country was the toughest choice for her and her family. She has always been an independent person with good instincts and a positive mind. The blessings of her family, her teachers and the good wishes of her friends has helped her in ways which can't be described.

Living in the United States has been full of adventures for her which she enjoys every day. She joined America Reads Challenge (PittServes) as soon as she joined the University. Also, she started a part time job with Sodexo at the William Pitt Union in January 2017 because she doesn't like to sit alone at home. In future, she aims to study the relationship between the United States, India and the Middle East and compare between the governance structures of major cities in each of these countries and what can be learnt from them. She would love to represent her country on matters related to women and child empowerment and diplomatic relations with the United States and the Middle East. For this purpose, she is learning Arabic as well. She can speak Hindi, Gujarati and Malayalam except for English of course!

Professional Biography – Tao Chen

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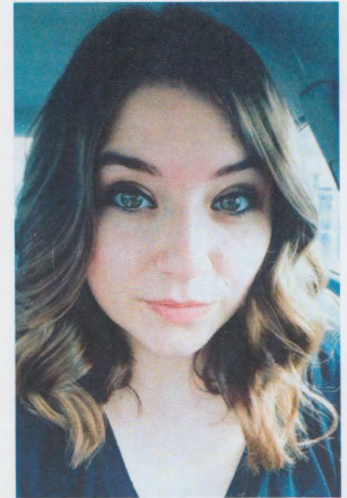


Tao Chen was born on January 14, 1992. He finished undergraduate study at Soochow University, where he majored in public administration program with a focus on public affairs and public relations. He is currently enrolled in Master of Public Administration program in Graduate School of Public International Affairs (GSPIA) at University of Pittsburgh, majoring in Policy Research & Analysis.

Tao started his career via internships during senior year of undergraduate, participating in fields of work such as market access, private banking, and corporate banking account management. After a brief period of being a corporate account assistant at a private-owned bank in China, he joined MSD China (known as Merck in the United States and Canada), working as an internal communications specialist for nearly two years. During that time, he was involved with internal event planning, digital communications, corporate branding, and employee engagement.

In early 2016, Tao made a major decision to quit his job at Merck to further study at GSPIA. Having gained experience in market access, corporate account management, and communications, he wished to take a step closer to his career goal of being a policy consultant for transnational corporations. In addition, he had knowledge in Microsoft Office skills, HTML coding, and branding video-making. Thus he will be focusing on quantitative and qualitative approach, as well as theoretical concepts, to better understand public policy and its mechanism.

Nicole Zeak, Masters in Public Administration



Nicole Zeak is a Social Worker and Graduate student living in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 2012, Nicole graduated from Mercyhurst University in Erie, PA with a Bachelor's degree in Social Work. During her education, she worked as an Adoption Social Worker for Family Services of Northwest PA, where she worked with the county to find kinship foster placements and adoptions for children suffering from abuse and neglect. After graduating, Nicole moved home to Pittsburgh and dedicated a year of service to her community through the AmeriCorps program. As an AmeriCorps member, Nicole was placed at Habitat for Humanity of Greater Pittsburgh, where she served as the Community Outreach Coordinator. As the Community Outreach Coordinator, she was responsible for connecting families to affordable housing programs, recruiting volunteers and donors for programs, and educating the community about the work and mission of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Pittsburgh.

After her year of service was complete with AmeriCorps in August of 2013, Nicole was hired as the Family Assistance Coordinator at South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM), formally known as South Hills Interfaith Ministries, located in the South Hills of Pittsburgh. As Family Assistance Coordinator, Nicole was responsible for connecting families to SHIM's basic needs services, including two food pantries, a clothing room, winter coats, utility assistance and more. She worked closely with families and the community to educate people on the concept of "suburban poverty" which was becoming an ever-growing problem in the South Hills. Nicole also worked with the growing refugee populations that were settling in that area of Pittsburgh.

In August of 2015, after almost two years with SHIM, Nicole left Pittsburgh to begin Graduate School at the University of Richmond, studying towards her Master's in Nonprofit Studies. While in Richmond, Nicole was determined to further her education and her love of nonprofits, while developing more skills to not just do direct social work with clients, but to one day be able to effectively and successfully run a nonprofit organization. Ultimately after a year of school, Nicole decided to transfer home to the University of Pittsburgh, where she is currently studying for her Master's in Public Administration, with a focus in Public and Nonprofit Management.

Most recently, Nicole worked for the Community Liver Alliance, a small nonprofit in Pittsburgh, as their Events Manager. She helped to further their mission of providing liver disease education and prevention to the Pittsburgh area. After a year in that position, Nicole left the Community Liver Alliance to focus on completing her Master's degree at the University of Pittsburgh. Nicole currently lives in the Dormont neighborhood of Pittsburgh, where she spends her spare time working as an actor and stage manager for the Heritage Players theater, taking American Sign Language lessons, and learning as much about the nonprofit sector in Pittsburgh as she can.

Kerry Glova, a Philadelphia native, graduated magna cum laude from Point Park University in 2015, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Behavioral Science. Under Point Park's focus on humanistic psychology and continental philosophy, Kerry became dedicated to the areas of abnormal psychology, therapeutic intervention, community behavioral health treatment, and the role of the nonprofit and public sectors in responding to the challenges of such interests, particularly for those involved in the criminal justice system. For her senior phenomenological thesis, Kerry completed a qualitative study on the transition of ex-inmates back into society after incarceration.



In 2015, Kerry enrolled in the University of Pittsburgh's School of School, originally pursuing a Direct Practice concentration with a certificate in Mental Health to later become a forensic psychotherapist. However, after studying closer the larger cultural, societal, and institutional factors that shape the experiences of behavioral health consumers, Kerry felt that working at the macro-level would be a more effective and valuable means to her social work practice. In 2016, she switched to the Master of Social Work's (MSW) Community, Organization, and Social Action concentration, and enrolled as a Joint-Degree student with the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA). At GSPIA, Kerry majors in Policy Research and Analysis as a Master of Public Administration (MPA) candidate.

Kerry has extensive experience in both the nonprofit and public sectors. She has interned as: an intake assistant for the Diocese of Pittsburgh's primary social service agency, a psychiatric social worker for Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, and as a quality improvement analyst for the oversight agency of all Medicaid-funded behavioral health services in Allegheny County. She has been employed as a children's literacy advocate for the Free Library of Philadelphia, a community outreach coordinator for GreatNonprofits, and as a data collector for a recent study by the RAND Corporation and the City Parks Alliance on physical activity in neighborhood parks. Currently, Kerry works full-time as an Activities Coordinator for the Academy Schools, a residential juvenile placement center for female adolescents adjudicated to behavioral health treatment.

Moving forward with her graduate career, Kerry hopes to combine her direct human services experience and training with a stronger statistical and methodological skillset. She will continue her career in the behavioral health field through program evaluation, quality improvement, research, advocacy, and public policy work. Kerry hopes to gain comprehensive knowledge of public administration, a discipline that is relatively new to her interests, and work for any county- or state-level Department of Human Services office or a similar entity. Her goal is to improve not only the system, but also the culture of mental health and substance use disorder treatment, especially for offenders, ex-inmates, juveniles, and any other populations marginalized by institutional inequality.



On May 20, 2017, Amanda Burkhart will celebrate 10 years as an employee at Action-Housing, Inc. (ACTION). Amanda currently sits on the board for three properties ACTION manages. In 2012, she was selected by her peers to receive the Emma Jean Louis Outstanding Teamwork Award. Amanda administers the Individual Development Account (IDA) program - a matched savings program designed to encourage saving and asset building among people with low incomes in the Pittsburgh Metro Region. Amanda also is certified through Neighborworks and the Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in pre-purchase advising, to advise people interested in purchasing a house and foreclosure counseling for those who may be struggling with their mortgage payments. Amanda has traveled to Harrisburg on two occasions to raise funds to continue the IDA program. She also quarterly teaches a class covering basic financial education.

Over the past ten years, Amanda has written and received many grants from the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, the Housing Partnership Network for funding from the Office of Housing and Urban Development, Assets for Independence in the Administration for Children and Families, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Citizens Bank, and First Commonwealth Bank.

In addition to administering IDA's for ACTION, Amanda has also been requested to offer technical assistance in the development and/or administration of programs targeted towards specific audiences:

- In 2009 and 2014, Women's Opportunity Resource Center in Philadelphia asked ACTION to administer its refugee resettlement IDA program.
- In 2013, United Way requested an IDA program focusing on women who have undergone a "life-changing crisis," such as divorce, medical concerns, or loss of job.
- In 2014, Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS), in conjunction with the national Jim Casey Foundation, asked ACTION to create a similar program aimed at youth who have aged-out of the foster care system. ACTION continues to assist DHS with administering the project and function as the fiscal entity.

Amanda graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 2003 with a Bachelor's of Arts in English Literature. In 2016, Amanda was accepted into the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs to work towards her Master of Public Policy & Management. There she hopes to gain the education and experience to develop programs and policies aimed at ensuring everyone has access to safe, decent, affordable housing and a quality education.

Jiixin Xu, Chinese, a first-year MPA student who focuses on PRA. In 2016 summer, she graduated from Wuhan University (A top 4 ranked “Project 985” university in mainland China) and obtained two bachelors, one is *Laws*, another is *Economics*. In undergraduate stage, she majored in *Ideological & Political Education* and minored in *Economics*. She learned various courses in two degrees, like administrative management, pedagogy, logic, sociology, microeconomics, international laws and so on.



She was hardworking and achieved scholarship for academic excellence in two consecutive years. In spare time, she enjoyed herself in all kinds of volunteer activities, especially for children who need help. She had participated in the “Caring for Autistic Children” project for three years, 2013-2016, at weekend every other two weeks. She provided psychological guidance for autistic children and had assisted over 20 autistic children on a one-to-one basis. In limited time for an undergraduate student in China, she tried her best to work in the field she interested during summer and winter vacations. In 2015 summer, she worked in Chinese Red Cross Foundation Hubei District as an internship for three months and focused on the donation activities planning. In 2014 summer, she worked in Human Resources and Social Security Bureau in Wuhan as an internship for two months and focus on the investigations about rural labor force and college students’ employment.

About future career, the young girl, who just turned 22 years old, does not have clear plan. She interests in consultancy, a field that is fast growing and have optimistic prospect in her mind. She wants to be a senior counselor in consulting company, like Deloitte & Touche Tohmatsu, and focuses on strategic management of enterprise. In the GSPIA times, she wants to learn more practical skills, like data analysis, that can be used in the future job. She also has a thought that continuing pursuing another master degree, like information system.

Elias Menninger

Elias Menninger was born to Karen Hacker and Eric Menninger in Cambridge, Massachusetts on December 19th, 1990. For the first eighteen years of his life, Elias went to public school in Newton, MA. During his early years, he was introduced to Mandarin Chinese by an elementary school teacher and immediately devoted much of his time to studying the language. Toward the end of high school, Elias was chosen as the only student from his high school to participate in renowned study abroad program in Beijing, China. After receiving early decision acceptance to the George Washington University in Washington, DC, Elias spent his second semester of senior year living with a host family in the heart of Beijing. For five months, Elias attended the prestigious Jingshan School, where he lived, breathed and studied Chinese. His time spent aboard gave him important insight on how to be self-sufficient, independent, and adaptable.



When college started in 2009, he was more prepared for the next chapter in life than many of his fellow classmates. While obtaining a double bachelor degree in history and Chinese, Elias also committed his time to participating in a variety of extracurricular activities, from hosting a weekly radio show to working as a publicity and marketing intern for a local music production company. In the fall of 2011, Elias once again returned to China, this time to spend a semester studying Chinese history in Xi'an and to travel the famous Silk Road. In May 2013, Elias graduated from GWU and spent the next year working as a DC tour guide. Like many of his previous work experiences, the tour guide position relied heavily on his communication ability. At a mere 26, Elias has already traveled to 25 countries. His thirst for global understanding was a key factor that drove Elias to graduate school in 2016.

Currently, Elias attends the University of Pittsburgh where he is pursuing a master's degree in International Development with a focus in human security. He hopes to find a career aboard working for either an NGO or IPO that works with tangible security issues like food, water and the environment. He is particularly interested in the use of public-private partnerships and the marketization of food and water. In his first semester he discovered that unlike gender equality and human rights, food and water security are much easier to identify and to bring about positive change. For that reason, Elias has devoted much of his studies to learning about water and food security, particularly in Southeast Asia. He was recently chosen to have his paper on Malaysian water security published in the Pitt Policy Journal.

When Elias is not working hard obtaining his degree, he spends his time hosting a weekly electronic music radio show on WRCT Pittsburgh and works part-time at a brand new Japanese restaurant called Umami in Lawrenceville.



Mohamed Jebrane Kensous is currently a first-year student in the Master of public and international affairs program with a major in International Political Economy at the graduate school of public and international affairs within the University of Pittsburgh.

Before coming to the University of Pittsburgh, he pursued a B.A in political science from the University of Mohamed V Rabat in Morocco. After receiving a Fulbright grant to study in the United States, he pursued a Master degree in political science and public policy and worked as a research assistant for Rabat Social Science Institute.

During his years at Mohamed V University he participated and organized several events as he was a founding member and president of the Model United Nations initiative in the same university. He actively helped organizing two MUN editions in 2014 and 2015 and participated in others in Morocco and Germany.

M.J.Kensouss also developed an interest in Green Energies and climate change. He was part of a scientific journey to Germany in October 2014, where he participated in events and conferences regarding this topic. He also participated in a collective publication of the German foundation, Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung with an article concerning the financing of the german "Energiewende".



Alexis Waksmunski

Alexis Waksmunski is a master's student at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) who will be graduating in spring 2017. Her master's degree will be in Public and International Affairs with a focus in Security and Intelligence. While a student at GSPIA Alexis studied abroad at the France Institute d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po) also known as the Paris Institute of Political Studies during her fall 2016 semester. She studied under Sciences Po's Paris School of International Affairs in its Master in International Security Department. Prior to attending GSPIA, Alexis graduated from Juniata College in spring 2015 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Politics and a minor in Peace and Conflict Studies. Outside of academia, Alexis has interned in several political and government related internships. She was an intern for Senator Robert P. Casey Jr. in his main office in Washington D.C. and his constituent service office located in Harrisburg Pennsylvania spanning from June to December 2014. Alexis also completed an internship in the Legislative Policy and Research Office within the Democratic Caucus in the Pennsylvania State Capitol. Most recently, she interned at the government consulting firm, Duane Morris Government Strategies in Pittsburgh where she continued to advance her skills and work experience. In July 2016, Alexis served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia where she witnessed history as the Democratic Party nominated the first female major party nominee for president. In addition, she is a part of a research group at GSPIA and is conducting and analyzing research alongside her classmates to shed light on issues regarding U.S. counter terrorism strategies and initiatives. As the day of Alexis's graduation from GSPIA approaches she continues to strive toward her career goals of working in the U.S. intelligence field in either the private or public sector. She hopes that she can bring all that she has learned from her years of study, multiple internships, and her continued involvement and interest in government and politics to a future career in these fields.

Nicholas Leffakis grew up in the city of Pittsburgh, in Lawrenceville to working class parents. He was one of twelve siblings. His father was an electrician for the Housing Authority. His mother often worked part time jobs from time to time to make ends meet.

He started his academic career at the Community College of Allegheny County not sure what to do with his life. While taking business classes the things that always interested him the most were when something about government or public intervention was covered. His interest was piqued. When was government intervention needed and when not, and why? With that thought in mind he took more related classes and in the end earning an Associates Degree in Liberal Arts in May of 2010.



Immediately following C.C.A.C. he continued his education by attending La Roche College. From the start of his time here he knew his next goal was graduate school but he wasn't sure what to major in. He took a comparative government, comparative public policy and others such as terrorism. These courses he took helped him realize that his goal public policy related. He wanted to further the critical thinking skills that would be needed for a career in public service. He graduated from La Roche College in May 2012 with Cum Laude Honors. G.S.P.I.A was one of the schools his academic advisor recommended. Although he was eager to enter graduate school right after undergrad, he knew he wasn't ready.

Four years later he applied to G.S.P.I.A. and began classes the fall semester of 2016. Still only dipping his feet in the waters, he is a part time student. However, that will change in the fall of 2017 as he plans to take a full course load.

His university goals are to attend more lectures by guest speakers on campus as well as the basics of attending more career fairs. He wants to become more skilled using statistical software packages such as Stata and SPSS. Ultimately, he wishes to finish his program with a synthesis of all the classes he's taken culminating in a thesis paper demonstrating the knowledge he's acquired. Fearing this and looking forward to this are competing emotions for him. This brings us to his aspirations for future employment.

Honestly, he isn't sure what his career aspirations are. Jobs that involve public data are an interest as of late for him. Perhaps in an organization dedicated to government accountability, images of the Government Accountability Office and Congressional Budget office come to mind. Though, these same organizations have state level counter-parts that would be more interesting to be part of as they have a more visible effect. You can really see the implications of their actions. In the end, he's open to any opportunity.

Cristy Halerz Schmidt



Cristy Halerz Schmidt has over 15 years of experience in the public sector, specializing in technology management and multimedia production for governments and schools. Currently an editor/videographer for the City of Pittsburgh, Cristy covers city council meetings and collaborates with the mayor's office and municipal departments to create informative visual programming for City Channel Pittsburgh. Before moving to Pittsburgh, she led a community media production studio for over 9 years, managing operations of two Public, Education and Government (P.E.G.) access television channels in Altoona, PA. Cristy has a B.A. from Pennsylvania State University in Integrative Arts, a self-designed curriculum intersecting digital media production, art history and women's studies. She is currently a master degree candidate at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA), studying Public Policy and Management. After graduate school, Cristy hopes to lead innovative policy and outreach initiatives to alleviate poverty by improving digital inclusivity and technology access for struggling urban and rural communities. She has volunteered as a mentor for Big Brothers/Big Sisters for 8 years and enjoys hiking, kayaking and cooking in her spare time.

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Leigh Carlson-Hernandez

Masters of Public Policy and Management

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Leigh Carlson-Hernandez grew up in the mountains of Colorado and attended the University of Northern Colorado where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology in 1994. In her early career she worked a variety of positions with young children and their families including special education, early care and education, and early intervention programs while raising her four children.

Recently, she has provided leadership for both local and state initiatives serving children and families including the Early Childhood Mental Health Advisory Committee, Strengthening Families Leadership Team, Board of Directors for the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children and Allegheny Family Network, State leadership team for Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) grant through the National Institute for Mental Health in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh and Peer Support Volunteer for Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania.

She works at the University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development and is the Family Support Policy Board Director for the Allegheny County Family Support network. In her position, she facilitates the Family Support policy board with members from diverse backgrounds and positions including parents, community members and the Department of Human Services. The board advocates for marshaling resources and promoting public policies to advance a comprehensive prevention agenda that emphasizes strength based principles. This agenda focuses on developing and preserving healthy families with children, particularly those under the age of eight. She leads efforts in advocating for increased and diversified funding sources, supporting parent leaders, establishing meaningful collaborations with legislators, community members, and agencies with shared goals and facilitating innovation in communities.

Her post graduate goals are to make a positive social impact on the lives of children and families through advocacy, public policy change and program development by increasing equal access to health, education and resources in communities. Enhancing the quality of currently established programs and practices, inspiring meaningful change to provide increased opportunities for families and children in vulnerable neighborhoods is vital for a positive social impact. She feels the Masters of Public Policy and Management would provide a firm foundation of knowledge to meet these goals by developing an understanding of public policy and development, negotiation, strategic planning and program evaluation.

Leigh also serves as a Community Partner on the Kidsburgh Advisory Team and Allegheny County Health Department Advisory Committee for the Plan for Healthier Allegheny, and the Co-chair for the Project LAUNCH State Young Child Wellness Council.

Guo Yuanfang

Personal Biography

Graduating from University of Hong Kong in 2016, Mr. Guo earned his bachelor degree in social science with a major in psychology. During the past recent years he had been doing internships in several different fields and institutions. With some basic knowledge and interest in economics and finance, he pursued his first summer intern in the investment bank division of The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, China headquarter. Later he also served for China Finance 40 Forum, providing routine preparations and material organization for the weekly conference of Chinese top economists. On the other hand, he cared about social problems and was eager to explore and learn more about Chinese society in different level. He believes that public administrators must not only acquaint with the elite and the bourgeois society but also be familiar with the diversities of the society. In the 2014-15 he worked part-time for Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, the largest NGO in Hong Kong and during the summer of 2015 he went to a town in Guangxi province as an aid teacher for local community service center. The experience in Guangxi further strengthened his belief that public administration must focus more on public instead of administration. The knowledge and respect for local community is the basis for providing administrative services. Direct copy of past experience and theories would very likely to fail and do harm to local society.



In the short-run he hopes to start his career from somewhere informative and inspiring, such as investment institutions and or government research departments. In the future he found it ideal to be an economist and sociologist.

Shutong Zhang's biography

Shutong Zhang is currently first-year MPA student in University of Pittsburgh, major in policy research and analysis. Zhang received his bachelor degree



in management from University of International Business and Economics in 2015.

So far he has been pursuing knowledge of public affairs, with which he hopes he can serve in the UN after graduation.

Biography



Chen Chen is a master student in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) of University of Pittsburgh where she studies public administration with a focus on nonprofit management. She intends to learn western managerial style and adapt its appropriate part to her home country, China, where nonprofit management is still at its infant stage.

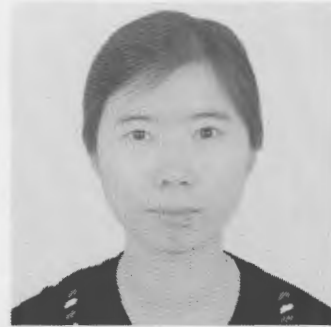
She graduated from Beijing Sport University in 2016. She gained bachelor degree of public affairs specializing in sports management there. During her undergraduate study, she interned in the Department of Legal Affairs and Investigation in the China Anti-doping Agency where she had grown interests in implications of sports –

fair and healthy play. She aims to explore more management skills from GSPIA into the sports field.

She also interned at the International Management Group in Beijing, China, and realized how important an international perspective it is in modern sports field. She determined to embrace more information of international affairs and think with depth. Therefore, she joined GSPIA in 2016.

In GSPIA, she expects to learn analytical as well as managerial skills, and then, apply them into her research field of interests, nonprofit organizations, especially in sports field.

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She is a first year MPA student of University of Pittsburgh, major in Public and Nonprofit Management. She graduated from Chang' an University, one of the State "211 Project" key development universities with the major in Public Affair Administration. She had worked hard in her program, maintained a top ranking in her class.

During her undergraduate years, she had participated in several investigations and research projects of various scales. One of the most valuable to her was a volunteering program of elementary school of migrant workers. She participated in this program when she was in her sophomore year. Because of her interest in education, she set up a group with four members to make an investigation on the present situation of Xi'an elementary school of migrant workers. They first discussed the research methods. She suggested to divide into two parts. One part was going to the government education department in various districts of Xi'an City, investigating the data about the distribution of migrant workers' elementary schools in various districts, the number of teachers and students in those schools and students' age while the other part was the investigation for specific schools. After they had confirmed their research methods, they divided into two groups and spent almost one month collecting data and making the field investigation. This program made she realize that the rationality of the distribution of educational resources is an important link to improve the quality of education, and it is even the most important factor.

In her junior year she learned the course of Community Management, in order to apply what she had learned in reality, she interned in a neighborhood community. During the four weeks of internship, she assisted the staff of the committee to do the work including patrolling in the community, clearing the community small ads, scrubbing publicity column etc. In her work, she made a proposal about improving the community publicity column based on the production of community media that she learned in the Community Management course. For example, apart from the notices of the neighborhood committee, some discount and new release information about the stores around the community were also suggested to add into to better serve residents' daily life.

Her short-term goal, after completing a graduate program, is to find a job linked to community service at first, and to participate in volunteer services in her leisure time as much as possible so that she can accumulate the fullest range of experience. Meanwhile, she hopes to be engaged in the work about nonprofit administration in the culture and education field. After accumulating sufficient working experience, her long-term goal is being a teacher for Nonprofit Management courses in the university of her own country because she treats it as a way to develop China's talents in this area.

ALEXANDRA "ALI" BORTOT MCCROSSIN

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Alexandra "Ali" Bortot McCrossin is a first year student in the part-time MPA program with a focus in public and nonprofit management. Ali is a Pittsburgh native and lifelong Pitt fan. She is a 2012 Magna Cum Laude graduate of the University of Pittsburgh's Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and History. During her time as an undergraduate student, Ali interned with former Pennsylvania State Senator John Pippy, former Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, and a candidate for United States Congress in Pennsylvania's 18th congressional district.

After completing her undergraduate degree, Ali worked in the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid at the University of Pittsburgh as an Admissions Counselor and eventually as an Assistant Director of Admissions. As an Assistant Director, Ali was in charge of the recruitment of University Honors College students.

In November 2015, Ali traded prospective students for alumni and took a position in the Office of Institutional Advancement at the University of Pittsburgh. In her current role, she works to build the Chancellor's Circle of Giving, the University's leadership annual giving program, by raising annual gifts of up to \$25,000. Ali finds meeting with Pitt alumni to be a rewarding experience, and enjoys building philanthropic relationships while connecting alumni with the University.

In the future Ali hopes to continue working in the fundraising and development world at either the University of Pittsburgh, or another Pittsburgh-based nonprofit. She hopes to serve the people of Pittsburgh in some capacity.

Ali lives in Regent Square with her pharmacist by day, Katz Graduate School of Business student by night husband. When she isn't on campus she can be found running, albeit slowly, in Frick Park, enjoying the newest Pittsburgh restaurant, volunteering with the Junior League, and coaching youth lacrosse.



Marie O'Connor works as the Program Administrator in the Office of Freshman Programs at the University of Pittsburgh where she enjoys assisting students, staff, and faculty. She recently began teaching Introduction to the Arts & Sciences, an orientation course designed to prepare students for the rigors of academic life. She also serves as the Digital Content Coordinator for the Congressional

Commission on the American Museum of Women's History. Marie began serving on the commission staff in December of 2015. She helps to oversee the commission's website and social media and lends her support to the Commission's research initiatives.

Twice a year, Marie volunteers on the Election Board for Ward 14-21 in Allegheny County, helping to execute elections in her community. Previously, Marie worked for the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History where she enjoyed ensuring a positive experience for guests. It was at the Carnegie Museums where she became interested in the ways public policy affects museum audiences. Prior to the Carnegie Museum, Marie spent a year working for TecBridge, a nonprofit organization focused on support for entrepreneurs in her hometown of Scranton, PA.

Marie graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 2013 with a B.A. in History and a minor in French Language and Literature. She is currently pursuing a M.P.A. in Public and Nonprofit Management at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

Julie Segner

PIA 2020

January 16, 2017



Currently, Julie Segner resides in the Northside neighborhood of Pittsburgh with her husband and adopted pitbull, Ginger, and cat Lucy. As a native resident of Pittsburgh, Julie has deep ties to the growth of the city, as she has watched many of the neighborhoods move from bust back to boom and couldn't be more excited about the future of this fair city. When she isn't working or studying, Julie enjoys a part-time job with the retail clothing company Anthropologie. Additionally, she can be found travelling between the beaches of Florida and the Outer Banks of North Carolina, as well as taking as many trips to museums that she possibly can.

In the final year of her MPPM degree from the University of Pittsburgh, Julie also works full time for the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh as the Associate Director of Development. In this role, she oversees close to \$2 million in contributed revenue from a variety of sources such as federal, state and local grants, corporate sponsorships, individual contributions and more. Her main focus is corporate contributions and in the almost two years she has spent with the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, she has increased this line by more than 11%. A significant portion of her time with the Museum is spent planning, fundraising and executing two major events; The Great Night Gala and Maker Faire Pittsburgh. At opposite ends of the spectrum, these two events catalyze support for the Museum through two major funding initiatives: the maker movement and free and reduced access to all members of our community. If asked, Julie would say her favorite part about working at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh would be all of the unsung initiatives the Museum is responsible for that many do not know about: accessibility and inclusion, work with post-foster care youth, the community museum at Hosanna House and outreach programs in WV.