

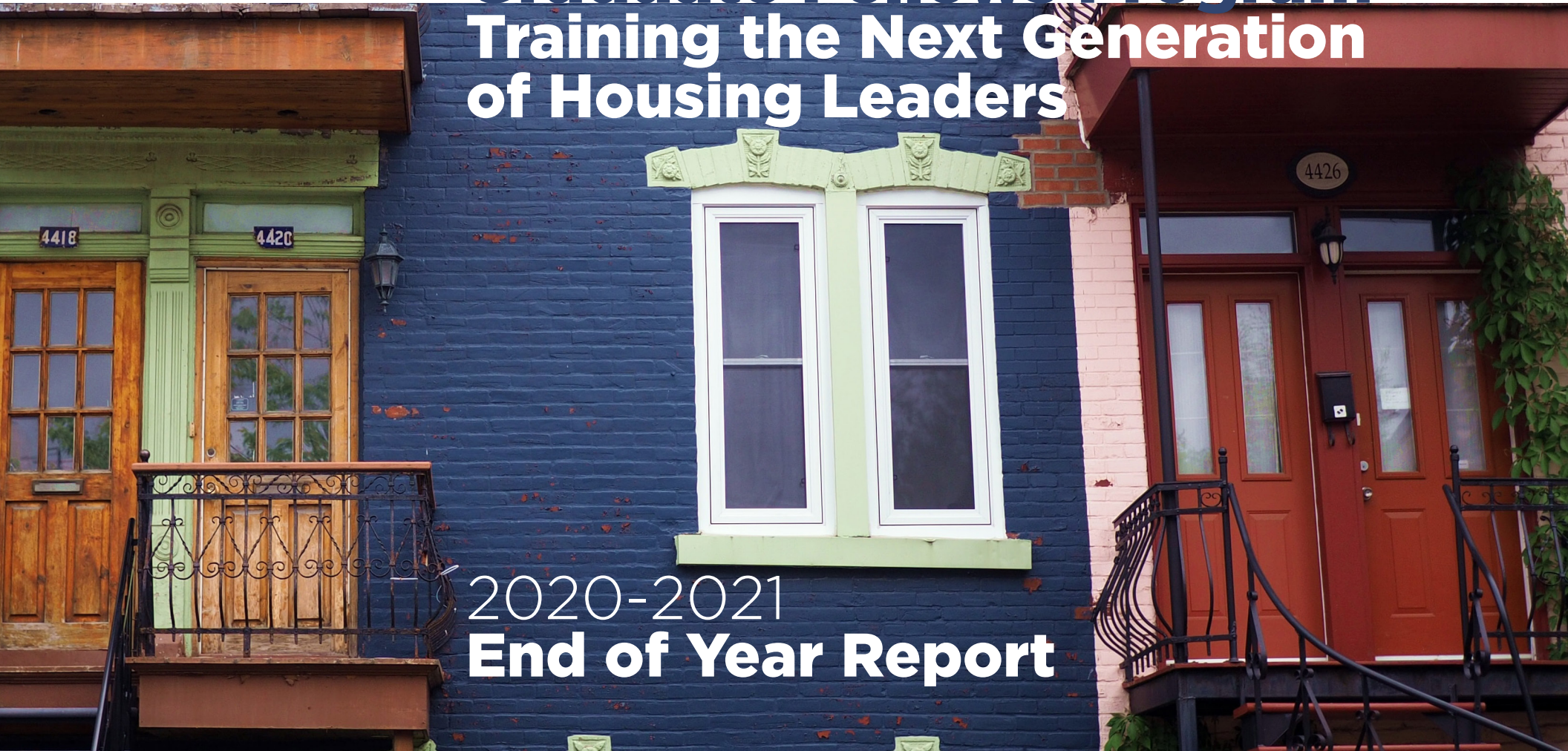
**Mansueto Institute
for Urban Innovation**

**University
of Chicago**

The Kreisman Graduate Fellows Program

Training the Next Generation of Housing Leaders

2020-2021
End of Year Report



Overview

The 2020-2021 cohort of Kreisman Graduate Fellows had an undeniably unique experience as they processed in real-time the ripple effect created by the COVID-19 pandemic on U.S. housing policy and markets. The Fellows, from across University of Chicago graduate schools, began the program in October 2020, shortly before the second wave of the pandemic. The first quarter of the Fellowship also coincided with a presidential administration change, which was expected to affect federal resources for housing assistance and programs. The Fellows in discussions with local housing thought leaders seized the opportunity to analyze emergency housing response – from eviction moratoriums to mortgage forgiveness, from hoteling homeless populations at unprecedented scales to rapidly rising real estate prices and vacation home sales – as well as future implications for fair housing legislation anticipated out of the Biden administration.

Despite the pandemic, Fellows were able to take on a wide array of internship placements and research projects this academic year. For the first time, the program had Fellows at State, City, and neighborhood housing organizations. In addition to civic agencies, Fellows took on roles with affordable housing lenders and developers. Several Fellows also conducted research, analyzing novel data sets to identify current and predicted trends in housing stability for families and incentives for green buildings. Through these professional development experiences, the Fellows were able to both provide support to housing organizations adapting to the pandemic and gain important perspective on the implementation of housing policy that will shape their future careers.

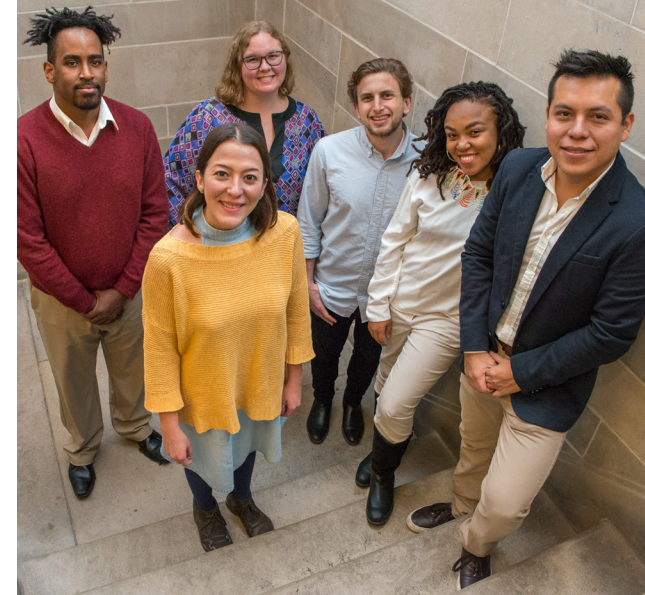
The following report summarizes the Fellows' activities, engagement and project work.

Program Goals

The Kreisman Graduate Fellowship brings together students across University of Chicago graduate programs – including policy, social services, law and social sciences – and places them in interaction with one-another and local leaders to discuss cross-discipline issues of housing and devise possible new solutions. The Fellowship activities emphasize an inter-disciplinary and inter-sector approach to connect ideas and people in unexpected ways, and ultimately to promote a better understanding of housing opportunities and solutions. Now concluding its third cohort, the nearly 30 students who have participated in the Fellowship are laying the foundation for a University of Chicago-trained network of experts who will be ideally positioned to address interrelated systemic challenges around housing law and policy.

2020-2021 Kreisman Graduate Fellows by the Numbers:

- 10 graduate fellows
- 5 UChicago graduate programs represented
- 6 housing thought leaders participating in intimate conversations with Fellows
- 10 alumni participating in virtual networking event to connect with current Fellows



Speaker Sessions



During the academic year, Fellows participated in three speaker sessions with leading thinkers in the housing field, with an emphasis on the pandemic's effects. The shift to virtual convening enabled Fellows to speak not only with Chicago leaders, but also prominent researchers doing national-level analysis. These meetings allowed Fellows to gain unfiltered perspective from those on the front lines of housing assistance and response, and ask off-the-record questions about their strategies, challenges, lessons learned, and predictions of what would come next. Fellows benefited from each other's unique points of view, often asking distinct questions that others would not have thought of.

COVID's impact on Chicago neighborhoods

November 2020



Daniel Kay Hertz

Policy Director,
Chicago Department of Housing



Miriam Zuk

Senior Program Director,
Enterprise Community Partners



Geoff Smith

Executive Director,
DePaul Institute for Housing Studies

This panel, representing City officials, a housing lender and a research institute, discussed how their organizations adjusted to the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic. The conversations explored strategies for standing up assistance infrastructure, redirecting investments, tracking displacements, and challenges posed by lack of real-time data.

The US eviction crisis

January 2021



Carl E Gershenson

Project Director,
Eviction Lab at Princeton University

The Princeton University Eviction Lab has published the first ever dataset of evictions in America, going back to 2000. This conversation explored how the Eviction Lab repurposed its data products to help policy makers anticipate and mitigate a wave of evictions in the wake of the pandemic. Discussion also covered how the Eviction Lab is working to demonstrate the relationship between evictions and other social outcomes in workforce, education and health, and the implications this could have for a more holistic legislative agenda at the national and local levels.

Alumni career guidance

February 2021

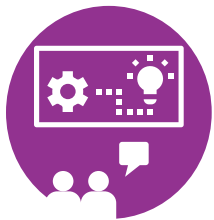


Alumni Networking Session

Taking advantage of the shift to virtual, for the first-time current Fellows and alumni had the opportunity to exchange career advice and experiential knowledge of the housing field in an open networking session.

Peer career guidance

March 2021



Project and Internships Peer Workshopping Session

This session dedicated to peer workshopping gave Fellows an opportunity to tease out difficult policy and research issues arising during their project work. Fellows were able to help each other connect the dots to suggest possible solutions and have increased visibility into the organizations other Fellows were supporting.

Inclusive development and recovery

April 2021



Patricia Fron

Executive Director,
Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance
(CAFHA)

CAFHA conducts research and advocacy on issues of equity, racial segregation, and housing choice in Chicago, particularly the City's voucher program. This session gave Fellows perspective on opportunities to ensure an equitable response to the pandemic, and the broad coalition of stakeholders necessary to do so.

Professional Development Sessions



In addition to developing their subject matter expertise, Fellows built professional skills necessary for becoming leaders in their fields. UChicago GRAD, the university's dedicated resource for career preparation, delivered professionalization workshops to help Fellows develop strategies for success in their work after UChicago. These sessions provided concrete guidance to help Fellows turn ideas into action.

Establishing an Effective Online Presence

December 2020

Fellows explored best practices for presenting their skills and experiences online, including crafting an effective LinkedIn profile and using LinkedIn for building professional connections.

Networking and Elevator Pitches

January 2021

Through public speaking exercises, the Kreisman Fellows crafted effective elevator pitches to showcase their unique contributions to housing research and policy. They discussed asking professionals impactful questions and strategized building professional networks for their careers

Writing for a Non-Specialist Audience

March 2021

Fellows discussed the advantages of publishing their housing research in popular media outlets as a way to impact public perceptions. They practiced pitching an article to a popular news outlet, and in turn refined the messaging of their housing and law expertise.

Project Management

May 2021

Fellows engaged with project management theories and practices. They received insights into organizing projects, managing teams, and effectively aligning resources to meet project goals.



Research Projects and Internships



Each Fellow receives funding to support their professional development in the form of a research project or internship of their own design. The goal is to provide Fellows with an opportunity to pursue a hands-on experience related to housing scholarship or practice that they wouldn't have otherwise been able to pursue.



Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery to property owners and tenants in housing assistance programs

Martin Beck

**M.S.W. Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice
Internship with Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund and The Michaels Organization**

In Summer 2021, Martin has internships at two major housing organizations. The first is with the Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund (CLIHTF). As a Special Initiatives intern, Martin will work in partnership with the Trust Fund's Rental Housing Support Specialist (Special Initiatives) and the City of Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Special Initiatives service delivery to property owners and tenants who participate in the program. The second is with The Michaels Organization, also known as Interstate Realty Management. As a community development intern, Martin has been assisting The Michaels Organization in creating a safe and strong community at their Westhaven Park development, which is the successor to the Henry Horner Homes.



Strengthening connections between opportunity zones and workforce housing supports

Ryan Billiteri

**M.S.W. Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice
Internship with Chicagoland Opportunity Zones Consortium**

For her fellowship, Ryan participated in an internship with the Chicagoland Opportunity Zones Consortium (COZC), administered by the Chicago Community Loan Fund (CCLF). As an intern with the COZC, Ryan was able to support efforts around opportunity zones and economic development in low-income neighborhoods. In particular, Ryan focused on assessing strategies and collaborators to build better linkages between opportunity zones and Workforce Housing in Chicago, an integration that has been effectively achieved in other municipalities. She supported a key COZC project advocating for additional funding opportunities for Workforce Housing, which provides housing up to 80% AMI and is targeted support for middle income residents. Ryan developed a logistic model to help COZC determine how to engage the City of Chicago in possibly offering waivers to the Affordable Requirements Ordinance so that Workforce Housing is feasible in the eyes of investors.



Analyzing the relationship between disinvestment and displacement in low-income Chicago neighborhoods

Omair Gill

**M.P.P. Harris School of Public Policy
Internship with Community Investment Corporation**

Omair conducted a research project with the Chicago Community Investment Corporation (CIC) to investigate the relationship between chronic real estate abandonment and disinvestment in certain Chicago neighborhoods and the loss of affordable housing in these areas. Though a common narrative is that urban gentrification has caused displacement in low-income neighborhoods, based on its work CIC suspected that disinvestment could be an even stronger force in the loss of affordable housing in Chicago. Omair analyzed census data over the past 70 years to identify trends in availability of affordable housing units. Omair applied machine learning and a clustering algorithm to classify census tracts as disinvested or gentrified, and create visuals showing the geographic relationship over time. This analysis will help CIC better tell the story of how different neighborhoods, conditional on certain characteristics, have seen their levels of affordable housing change over time.



Informing implementation strategies for future eviction and foreclosure prevention programs

Mara Heneghan

**M.A. Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice
Research Project with Cook County Government**

For her Kreisman project, Mara is writing a case study of Cook County Legal Aid for Housing and Debt (CCLAHD), which helps residents resolve eviction, foreclosure, and consumer debt cases through legal aid, mediation, and connection to other social services. By covering the creation of CCLAHD, its relationship to previous County programs, and its evolution over the course of the pandemic, her case study is intended to provide implementation guidance to inform other government and social service programs focused on eviction and foreclosure prevention and housing stability. Mara intends to apply her course learning to her case study to connect how this partnership has played out through CCLAHD and what lessons this case study can provide for continued partnership between actors across the social sector moving forward.



Evaluating the future of rent affordability following increased property taxes on multi-unit buildings and implications for cost-burdened renters

Lauren Kataja

**M.P.P. Harris School of Public Policy
Research Project with South Side Housing Data Initiative**

Lauren's Kreisman project explored how projected assessments of Class 3 properties – buildings with 7+ residential units – could impact rent affordability for Chicago's low-income renters. She developed a model that was informed by Myer Blank, a property tax consultant, and Jocelyn Hare, the Assistant Director of Harris Policy Labs and leader of the Southside Housing Data Initiative project. She used parcel-level data exported from Landgrid to create a sample of class 3 properties in the Hyde Park, Washington Park, South Shore, and Woodlawn neighborhoods. Combining both census-level demographic data from the American Community Survey, and rental information scrapped online, she was able to show how the impact of doubling the property taxes on Class 3 buildings trickles down to rent prices, often pushing them over the affordability threshold for already cost burdened renters. As Lauren leaves the University of Chicago and starts her full-time position at POAH Communities as the Community Impact Operations Associate, she hopes to be quicker to investigate hidden policy hurdles to housing affordability, such as the one she explored with her Kreisman project.



Helping elected officials and the general public better access affordable housing financing

Elizabeth Lehman

**M.P.P. Harris School of Public Policy/M.B.A. Booth School of Business
Consultancy with City of Chicago Department of Housing**

Elizabeth worked as an independent consultant for the City of Chicago Department of Housing, supporting Policy Director Daniel Hertz develop a guide on how to get started with affordable housing projects regardless of the project type or stage. The guide is meant to be broadly available throughout the City and will be valuable for the Department to be able to send to those who inquire about affordable housing in their own communities. The Department will use this guide to answer questions often posed to them by developers, aldermen, and the public. Those who access this centralized resource will become better informed about options for affordable housing finance at each stage of a project. The goal is that this channeling of information will lead to more affordable housing being built because developers and landlords learn about funding options that they previously did not have access to. The guide will also advance one of the Department's primary goals of promoting equity in Chicago by expanding access to affordable housing resources and eventually availability of affordable housing stock.



Measuring the social impact of investor support in expanding affordable housing

Akerah Mackey

M.P.P. Harris School of Public Policy

Internship with Illinois Housing Development Authority

Akerah worked with the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) Finance Department to produce an investor relations report outlining IDHA's impact, track record in promoting affordable housing, and strong financial oversight. Akerah worked across Finance units – including capital management, financial planning & analysis, and controllership – as well as the Community Affairs and Strategic Planning & Reporting units to assess and document IDHA's social impact across its portfolio. Akerah's compilation of data and results was critical to ensuring transparency of IDHA's work and driving the strategic delivery of IDHA's mission to provide affordable housing in Illinois.



Understanding the role of institutional actors in the process of neighborhood change

Shannon Morrissey

Ph.D. in Sociology, Division of the Social Sciences

Dissertation research on the relationship of institutional actors to gentrification

Shannon's research explores the mechanisms that sustain structural inequality in cities and the role of organizations in defining and transforming communities through projects like urban renewal, historic preservation, and place-making. Urban sociologists have long studied the effects of gentrification, but there is limited focus on the organizational actors that play major roles in this process. Shannon is conducting a historical and comparative study of neighborhood change in Atlanta and Chicago, with particular attention to the role of community organizations and private companies in redistricting and redrawing boundaries between various counties and municipalities. Quite often, the study of gentrification is approached quantitatively which may identify trends and patterns, but cannot illuminate the role of organizations in changing the urban landscape. Shannon is combining this method with spatial data science to compare multiple case studies of strong organizational actors in the process of neighborhood change. The project begins with an exploration of the history of homeownership and laws around private property and land management in the U.S.



Determining how homeownership contributes to wealth building for transnational immigrant families

Ilana Mijal Ventura

Ph.D. in Sociology, Division of the Social Sciences

Dissertation research on wealth building trends for immigrant families

Ilana studies the relationship between transnational immigrant family networks, labor market opportunities and immigrant economic outcomes (including homeownership, both in the US and in the family's country of origin). Home ownership is one of the few socioeconomic outcomes in the United States that does not depend on legal status of the immigrant. Indeed, even undocumented immigrants can get mortgages and own homes. Homeownership is therefore an important means to build long-term and intergenerational wealth for immigrant families. For her Kreisman project, Ilana expanded her dissertation research on why long-term migrants and the second generation invest in the communities of origin of their parents despite their apparent assimilation. She suspects the development of a different sort of wealth building strategy for middle-class Latin American immigrants to the US that challenges the conception of assimilation and the erosion of transnational ties over time. Explanations for this development are intertwined with both how immigrants and the second generation conceive of their country of settlement, family and care, as well as about planning for and anticipating the future. As Ilana continues with her fieldwork on this project, she will attempt to make a methodological argument that studies of immigrant family wealth and wealth building must take into account both what is happening in the US and also what is happening internationally.



Assessing how the COVID-19 pandemic affected U.S. housing security and creating infrastructure to track long-term financial hardships for renters and homeowners

Ryan Webb

M.S. in Computational Analysis and Public Policy, Harris School of Public Policy

Internship with Mansueto Institute Urban Research Corps

For his fellowship, Ryan joined the Mansueto Institute's Urban Research Corps to look at how the pandemic has affected housing security. He worked with Nico Marchio, the Institute's resident data scientist, to process and analyze an experimental survey from the Census Bureau called the Household Pulse Survey. Their biggest success has been building out the infrastructure to process and work with the data to enable long term analysis. They believe that long-term this information could be useful to assess financial hardships imposed by the pandemic and the reaction of both renters and homeowners to these added hardships. One common observation they saw was that, across groups and metro areas, renters were much more likely to be concerned about making their next rent payment than homeowners were regarding their mortgage. Ryan believes that observations like this and the work that will build from it could be used to help inform experts' understanding of the national eviction landscape.

Prior Year Kreisman Graduate Fellowship Highlights

Sampling of topics explored in past Fellowship projects and internships:

- Predictive models around building abandonment in Chicago
- Spatial access to public goods for Chicago Housing Authority residents
- Cash home buying practices in cities during the Great Recession
- History of exclusionary zoning, upzoning and disparate impact claims under the Fair Housing Act
- Homeless youth service providers accessing funding resources and award criteria
- Historical progression and current state of multifamily housing in Brazilian markets
- Equitable transit-oriented development in Chicago to improve neighborhood quality of life

Kreisman Fellowship Alumni working in the field:

- Chicago Housing Authority
- Housing Authority of Champaign County
- School of Social Work, Aurora University
- Federal Reserve Banks of Chicago & Philadelphia
- Goulston & Storrs, Land Use and Real Estate Practice
- CIM Group
- Results for America

