2019 ANNUAL REPORT
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
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Letter from IPD’s Directors

Since 2013, Innovations for Peace and Development (IPD) has curated an interdisciplinary space for policy-relevant research on international development, global security, conflict and peacebuilding at the University of Texas at Austin. IPD democratizes engagement in academic research and policy work for students at all stages of their university education, with particular emphasis on the recruitment and training of women and underrepresented groups. IPD students learn valuable skills, ranging from geographic information system (GIS) mapping to data analysis, as they work on collaborative research teams and manage their own projects. Since our founding, more than 500 undergraduate and graduate students have participated in IPD’s mentored research opportunities.

IPD has had a significant impact on both academic scholarship and public policy. Our foreign aid geo-mapping work was featured by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the US Agency for International Development. IPD’s work on climate change and development aid contributed to the Multilateral Development Banks’ initiative to track the impact of climate financing on adaptation and mitigation. Our students have presented at the G8 Food Security Summit, USAID’s TechCon, and international academic conferences. IPD alumni go on to work for influential policy organizations, including the Brookings Institution, the US State Department, the United Nations and many others.

We continue to add new internships, fellowships, courses, skill-building workshops and opportunities for career advancement. IPD student researchers have participated in internships with prominent agencies, such as USAID and AidData, in Washington, DC, Ethiopia, Mexico, Uganda, Senegal, Haiti, Mexico, Nepal, Timor-Leste and other locations. We enroll 30 students in an innovative year-long Government Department research practicum and ten students participate in the Next Generation Scholars fellowship program at the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law.

In its first five years, IPD generated nearly $4 million in research funds for UT Austin, with key support from the National Science Foundation, the USAID Higher Education Solutions Network, and the US Department of Defense Minerva Initiative. Most recently, we were awarded a grant from the United States Institute of Peace to study Chinese investment in South Sudan. We continue to pursue federal and foundation grants to sustain and grow IPD’s work and student opportunities.

We are especially grateful for the support provided thus far by the LBJ School of Public Affairs and the UT Austin College of Liberal Arts, especially the Department of Government, Liberal Arts Honors, and Plan II. We look forward to expanding our scope of work, student membership, and faculty participation in the coming year.

Michael G. Findley
Professor, Department of Government

Catherine E. Weaver
Associate Dean for Students and Associate Professor,
LBJ School of Public Affairs

Rachel L. Wellhausen
Associate Professor, Department of Government
IPD Overview

Innovations for Peace and Development (IPD) is a student-focused research lab that provides mentored opportunities for interdisciplinary, policy-relevant research on global conflict and peacebuilding, foreign aid, and poverty alleviation. Since 2013, IPD has brought together over 600 undergraduate and graduate students, and over 100 students are conducting research in Spring 2020. IPD has worked in collaboration with the World Bank, African Development Bank, UN Peacebuilding Fund, US Agency for International Development (USAID), US Department of Defense, and many other non-governmental organizations in the US and abroad. IPD students have won prestigious Presidential Management and Boren Fellowships, and alumni have embarked on impressive careers in academia as well as at the World Bank, UN agencies, the US State Department, USAID, and global non-governmental organizations.

IPD’s goals are to provide on-campus experiential learning, applied training, and international professional opportunities to UT students to empower them to fulfill UT’s motto, “What Starts Here Changes the World.” Much like the traditional lab setting in the natural sciences, Principal Investigators (PIs) work with student teams to produce leading research, and both graduate and undergraduate students author academic papers and present at international conferences. IPD scholarship has appeared in leading outlets in political science, law, and public policy. We are also proud that IPD work has featured in high-level policy forums, including at the US Senate, US State Department, National Intelligence Council, US Institute of Peace, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and several agencies within the United Nations. And, our work has been covered by media outlets including The Economist, New York Times, and NPR.

In monthly all-hands meetings, weekly sub-team meetings and supplementary training sessions, IPD students receive focused training in topics including geographic information systems (GIS), statistical software, grant proposal and analytical writing, presentation skills, project evaluation, and cutting-edge research methods including survey and field experiments. Moreover, IPD provides for-credit opportunities through several novel courses, including a year-long undergraduate research practicum in the Government Department; graduate supervised research and conference course in the Government and Public Affairs Department; summer joint internships with leading organizations in Washington, DC; and internships in international development in a variety of locations in Africa, East Asia, and Latin America.

To date, IPD has worked on a 0% administrative budget, channeling all of our funds into student fellowships, internships, and travel stipends. We are aggressively pursuing federal, foundation, and community support to enable IPD to continue and to grow. Our current priorities are to raise funds for 10-15 undergraduate and graduate research fellowships, as well as to support a full-time administrative manager to oversee our group of student researchers, our grant activity, communications, and outreach. Please get in touch for more information on how to support IPD students (www.ipdutexas.org).
Research Teams

Innovations for Peace and Development organizes research teams around its major projects. Each team is led by one or two Graduate Research Fellows, in conjunction with IPD’s faculty directors. IPD Research Affiliates—graduate and undergraduate students from across the UT Austin community—join a team to gain experience applying substantive skills to a specific research topic over the course of a year. The focus on teamwork and mentoring offers students the opportunity to attain valuable professional experience in project management, data analytics, and writing for professional conferences and high-level publications, all while contributing to real projects. In 2017-2018, IPD has hosted a wide variety of teams:

Governance

The Governance team uses statistics, GIS mapping, and in-depth data coding to study states’ abilities to make and enforce rules, deliver services to citizens, and maintain the monopoly over the legitimate use of force across their territories. The team’s current projects relate to natural resources, regulatory compliance in the finance industry, the impact of corruption on electoral outcomes, patronage jobs in young democracies, and the prevention of negative externalities in foreign aid projects. Since 2015, the team has completed fieldwork in Honduras, cleaned 1,000+ variable datasets on multiple Latin American countries, compiled the world’s most comprehensive georeferenced dataset on natural resources, and drafted three working papers on the above projects. In the process, the team gained valuable skills in geocoding, data visualization using GIS mapping software, and data cleaning as well as statistical analysis using Excel, Stata, R, and Python.
Data4Peace

The Data4Peace team explores data-driven strategies to understand the success of peacebuilding operations in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Using a new database of peacebuilding activities that the Data4Peace team has developed, the team is carrying out a generalized synthetic control analysis of peacebuilding success. Initial results, presented at the United States Institute of Peace in Washington D.C., show that peacebuilding is effective at reducing violent armed conflict, and instead encouraging more formal means of political participation. The team is also working on coding territorial control patterns in Afghanistan. Using a coding procedure pioneered by Innovations for Peace and Development faculty and research fellows, the team is coding tens of thousands of battle events, then using sophisticated GIS techniques to produce battle zones, with the ultimate goal of understanding whether territorial control affects violence against civilians. Initial results of this analysis demonstrate that when rebels gain control of new territories that they move to consolidate their control by using violence to intimidate and coerce civilians into cooperation with the new rebel control. The coding efforts and research are in late stages and the team expects to prepare them for publication during summer 2020.

Law4Development

Promises to increase access to foreign aid, trade, and finance as well as threats to reduce access to each are often employed by economically-powerful countries as leverage to influence the policy decisions made by developing countries’ leaders. The Law4Development team investigates when and how these sources of economic influence have been employed and explores the determinants of relatively effective and ineffective attempts at steering policy diffusion. Of particular interest in our work is how global systemic factors influence the proliferation of international laws and norms. Team members take several avenues to explore and understand these dynamics.

Using qualitative and quantitative methods, the team studies the degree to which great power countries align in their interests in developing states and how alignment, misalignment, free-riding, and rivalry between these great powers affect human rights, human migration, and security outcomes in developing countries. First, the team conducts in-depth case studies on cases in which foreign aid commitments or revocation threats were explicitly tied to policy change in developing countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. For each case, the team members collect information about the relationships and communications between the donor and recipient states in addition to collecting data on the targeted policies and eventual outcomes. Second, the team explores variation in the prioritization of specific foreign policy goals over time within and between powerful donor countries, collecting and coding.
this information from a wide range of development agency and foreign policy reports in order to generate estimates of foreign policy alignment and prioritization over time. Third, team members explore the geographic distribution of south-south development finance and how the rise of outside options for development finance affects the ability of traditional donors to influence policy in developing countries.

Property Rights and Poverty

Property Rights and Poverty is a team that cleans, compiles, and learns from data on individuals' livelihoods in severely impoverished areas, both in the United States and abroad. Projects will focus on financial insecurity, especially on Native American reservations; insecurity in the ability of black South Africans’ and Namibians’ ability to own productive agricultural land, as a result of racist apartheid legacies; and the controversial role of international law in helping multinational corporations protect their property rights when investing abroad.

Data4Development

Data4Development is a new team in Fall 2019. The team aims to answer big questions concerning shifts in global power and its consequences for the governance of world economy and socio-economic development. We study the shifting balance of power in international finance institutions (like the World Bank and IMF), the transparency and accounting of aid, and global indices (like the Corruption Perception Index) to assess and drive the performance of the state in the world economy. We collect key data such as relative economic weights of countries and other measures of national power and influence, staff composition in international financial institutions, and other variables to study power shifts in global economic governance. We use the data to examine the variables that influence power within international financial institutions. One of the issues that this team looks at is how countries gain influence within these organizations. We look beyond the traditional measure of power – voting share, and look at the nationalities of key executives as an indicator of the country’s influence within that organization.

Civil-Military Relations Team

Prominent global development scholars have cited the importance of local and national institutions in shaping political, social, and economic outcomes of countries throughout the world. Often in developing post-conflict societies, the military represents one of the strongest institutions available to influence the political, social and economic conditions. A greater understanding of the intricate relationship between a country’s military forces and the society in which they serve lends itself to a better understanding of the complex nature of development. To date, little publically available data exists with regard to global militaries, preventing researchers from exploring the impact of civil-military relations. This lack of clarity on intra-country military locations and distributions presents an obstacle to social scientists and researchers seeking to explore this influential institution. Furthermore, no simple methodology currently exists to collate this information, making it expensive in terms of time and labor for an individual researcher.

The Civil-Military Relations Team seeks to overcome this challenge. By employing various lines of research, including investigation of news media, GIS resources, and other publicly available sources, the IPD Civil-Military Data Team seeks to understand how various countries structure their military forces, create panel datasets of military geolocations, employ GIS tools to empower researchers, and to begin exploring the role of civil-military relationships in the developing world.
Leadership

Directors

Michael (Mike) Findley is a Professor in the Government Department at the University of Texas at Austin. His research and teaching examine political violence, international political economy, and international development. He conducts ongoing fieldwork in numerous countries including Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan, South Africa, Colombia, and Democratic Republic of Congo, among others. Mike also works extensively with international development organizations including the World Bank, USAID, the African Development Bank, and the International Aid Transparency Initiative, along with many developing country governments. His work influences government deliberations and legislation, is covered broadly in the global media, and is incorporated by international development actors.

Catherine (Kate) Weaver is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean of Students at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. Kate conducts extensive qualitative fieldwork all over the world and publishes widely on the political economy of aid and the reform of international development institutions. Kate is also completing a book project on the diffusion and impact evaluation of global open aid policies and practices, and writes widely on transparency and accountability in global economic governance. Kate works closely with the Eleanor Crook Foundation to design and implement a new grants and capacity building program for local organizations working on nutrition security in northern Uganda. Kate is also a Distinguished Scholar at the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security & Law.

Rachel Wellhausen is an Associate Professor of Government at the University of Texas at Austin, with courtesy appointments at the McCombs School of Business and the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Her research in international relations and international political economy focuses on the impact that multinational corporations, financial markets, international institutions, and political risk have on development. She also works on development issues within the United States, particularly regarding American Indian tribes and US territories. Rachel has published in the American Political Science Review, the Quarterly Journal of Political Science, International Studies Quarterly, the Journal of Conflict Resolution, MIT Press, and other outlets. In her book, The Shield of Nationality (Cambridge University Press 2015), Rachel uses firm nationality to explain conflicts between host governments and multinational corporations.
Senior Resident Scholar

Dr. James Stevenson is an Agricultural Research Officer at the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization in Rome. He works with a team of researchers that assesses the impact of agricultural and natural resource management technologies, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia; focusing on the work of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) global research partnership. He collaborates with economists, agronomists, biophysical scientists, statistical agencies in African countries and with other global institutions (e.g. World Bank LSMS-ISA team; IFAD) to improve the quality and relevance of agriculture-related data in a number of countries around the world. Dr. Stevenson currently co-manages a $12 million USD grant on “Strengthening Impact Assessment in the CGIAR” (SIAC), with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development.

Faculty Affiliates

In 2016, IPD established a Faculty Affiliates program to engage both in-resident UT Austin faculty and non-resident faculty at other universities worldwide in our ongoing research and professional development activities. The IPD faculty affiliates collaborate on research, grant fundraising, and sharing of work through our speaker series.

Dr. Alexander Betts is the Leopold W. Muller Professor of Forced Migration and International Affairs at the University of Oxford, where he is also Director of the Refugee Studies Centre, and a Fellow of Green-Templeton College.

Dr. Joshua Busby is Associate Professor at LBJ School, a fellow with the RGK Center and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and Distinguished Scholar at the Strauss Center for International Security & Law.

Dr. Sarah Bush is Associate Professor of Political Science at Yale University. She was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Belfer Center at the Harvard Kennedy School. She received her PhD in Politics from Princeton University in November 2011.

Dr. Susanna Campbell is Assistant Professor at American University’s School of International Service. She is Principal Investigator of “Aiding Peace? Donor Behavior in Conflict-Affected Countries.”
Dr. Jason Cons is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at UT-Austin. He works on borders in South Asia (with a focus on Bangladesh), climate and agrarian change, and rural development.

Dr. Joshua Eisenman (马佳士) is an Associate Professor of Global Affairs at the University of Notre Dame and a senior fellow for China studies at the American Foreign Policy Council in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Erin C. Lentz is an Assistant Professor at UT Austin’s LBJ School of Public Affairs. She researches issues of food insecurity, aid, gender and assistance policies in East Africa and South Asia.

Dr. Caroline Faria is an Assistant Professor of Geography at UT Austin. She is a feminist political and cultural geographer working on gender and nationalism.

Dr. Caroline Faria is an Five College Assistant Professor of Government at Smith College. She studies identity, public opinion, political behavior, and policy, with a focus on African countries.

Dr. Erin C. Lentz is an Assistant Professor at UT Austin’s LBJ School of Public Affairs. She researches issues of food insecurity, aid, gender and assistance policies in East Africa and South Asia.

Dr. Susan D. Hyde is a Professor of Political Science at University of California, Berkeley. She studies international influences on domestic politics, particularly in the developing world.

Dr. Diane Coffey is Assistant Professor of Sociology and Population Research at UT Austin. Her research examines intergenerational transmission of poor population health resulting from India’s poor maternal nutrition.

Stephen Davenport is Global Lead for Open Government and Citizen Engagement at the World Bank Group. He has more than 18 years of experience in development, including program management, innovation, strategic product planning, and delivery of e-Government services.
Dr. Stephanie Seidel Holmsten is Lecturer of International Relations and Global Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research focuses on the election of ethnic minorities and women to national legislatures around the world.

Dr. Ole Jacob Sending is Director of Research at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). He researches the role of international and non-governmental organizations in global governance.

Dr. Joseph K. Young is Associate Professor at American University in the School of Public Affairs and the School of International Service. He studies international conflict, violence and global terrorism.

Dr. Jason Sharman is the Sir Patrick Sheehy Professor of International Relations in the Department of Politics and International Studies at Cambridge. He researches tax havens and money laundering in global finance.

Dr. Lauren Prather is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of California, San Diego, in the School of Global Policy and Strategy.

Josh Powell is the Deputy CEO at Development Gateway. He also coordinates DG’s Results Data Initiative, which supports evidence-based decision-making within the Governments of Tanzania and Malawi, and DFID.

Dr. Dr. Raj Patel is a Research Professor at UT Austin’s LBJ School of Public Affairs. He studies the global food system and alternatives to it. Dr. Patel is a frequent TED talk presenter and an award-winning author.

Dr. Dean Spears is Assistant Professor of Economics at UT Austin, where he is an affiliate of Innovations for Peace and Development and of the Population Research Center, and is a visiting economist at the Indian Statistical Institute in Delhi.

Dr. Rebecca Lewis is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at UT Austin. She is the founder and Director of the Ankoatsifaka Research Station in the Kirindy Mité National Park in Madagascar.
Research Fellows

Michael (Mike) Denly is a PhD student in the Department of Government. Mike's research focuses on the political economy of development and democratization. At IPD, Mike leads the Governance Team, which is currently undertaking projects related to natural resources, patronage, state capacity, and corruption. Prior to joining UT Austin, Mike consulted on matters concerning governance, anti-corruption, climate finance, and education for the World Bank. Mike holds a dual MA in Development Management and Policy from Georgetown University and Universidad Nacional de San Martin in Argentina, an MSc in Public Policy and Human Development from Maastricht University in the Netherlands, and a BA in International Studies from the University of Denver. Mike has studied and worked in various countries in Europe, Latin America, and Africa, and is fluent in French, Spanish, and Italian, and also speaks basic Dutch.

Ethan Tenison is a graduate student pursuing a Masters of Global Policy from the LBJ School of Public Affairs. He earned his undergraduate degree in Government and Spanish from the University of Texas in 2012. Ethan has experience working for the liberal Catalan Nationalist party in Barcelona, Spain, and he was a bilingual educator in Texas for three years prior to attending LBJ. He is particularly interested in using data science methods to solve issues in international development. While at IPD, he learned R and ArcGIS, and is currently learning machine learning methods to analyze Central American migration. Ethan is the Program Manager of IPD.

Calvin Thrall is a PhD student in the Department of Government. Calvin studies the complex political interactions between states, multinational corporations, and citizens; along with program director Rachel Wellhausen, he has published a paper on investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) in the Review of International Organizations. He is also interested in computational social science. Prior to attending UT, Calvin received his BA in political science from Temple University in Philadelphia. At IPD, Calvin leads the Property Rights and Poverty team.
Brandon Podojil is currently a graduate student pursuing an MPAff from the LBJ School. He earned his undergraduate degree in economics from the United States Military Academy and received his commission as an Army Officer in 2011. Brandon has field experience as a military officer in Afghanistan and Kuwait and as a student intern working for the Greater Camden Partnership in Camden, New Jersey, where he worked on poverty relief and economic development policy projects. Brandon is particularly interested in the US military’s role in fostering post-conflict economic growth in conjunction with other government, non-government, and nonprofit entities. Brandon leads the newly established Civil-Military Relations Team. Following his time at the University of Texas, Brandon will serve as an economics instructor at West Point.

Hillary Corwin is a PhD student in the Department of Government. She holds MS and BS degrees in international political economy from the University of Texas at Dallas. Hillary has worked with the United States Agency for International Development on economic development policies and social inclusion projects for vulnerable populations in the Latin American and Caribbean region. She conducts research in economic statecraft in the settings of international development, security, and human rights. Her current research investigates how interest alignment between powerful states along multiple dimensions alters the efficacy of economic influence in achieving foreign policy goals. Hillary leads the Law4Development team at IPD.

Harshal Zalke is a graduate student pursuing MGPS from the LBJ School of Public Affairs. He has a Bachelors in Mechanical Engineering and a Masters in Operations Research. He is interested in studying how states interact in multinational governance institutions and the impact of those interactions on global economic activity. In addition to working at IPD, he is studying the political risk associated with Chinese investments. Harshal leads the Data4Development team at IPD.
Amila Lulo is an undergraduate student pursuing a BS in Computation Biomedical Engineering and a BA in International Relations and Global Studies. At IPD, Amila leads the Data4Peace team, which explores data-driven and evidence-based strategies in its research of territorial control in Afghanistan, evaluation of the state of evidence in peacebuilding interventions, and study of discussion of external validity in academic literature. Outside of IPD, Amila’s current research investigates the effect of emerging digital technologies on the improvement of economic growth and development policy.

Raymond Weyandt is a graduate student and public policy researcher pursuing a Masters of Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs. He earned his undergraduate degree in Government from the University of Texas in 2016. Raymond has the distinct privilege of leading IPD’s communications team, a lean and efficient operation focused on building IPD’s audience and telling the story of IPD’s student-driven research. Raymond has worked as an independent research and communications consultant since 2016, writing and contributing to publications for the Open Government Partnership (OGP), the City of Austin, and other organizations. In 2018, he authored OGP’s independent evaluation of the City of Austin’s open government portfolio. Raymond is also a freelance photographer whose work has been featured in publications by USAID and AidData. Raymond’s current research interests focus on migration, security, policing and human rights in Central America, Mexico, Texas and the United States.
IPD Student Research Affiliates, 2019-2020

Nick Barracca, Master of Global Policy Studies
Joshua Klein, Master of Public Affairs-DC Concentration
Cynthia Sun, International Relations Security in Asia
Amelia Vorpahl, Master of Public Affairs
David Tibaquira, Government
Andrew Butemeyer, International Relations
Kristle Hinola, International Relations and Global Studies
Saamia Imtiaz, International Relations | Plan II

Jon Bishop, International Relations | Government and History
Francesca D’Annunzio, Investigative Journalism (Humanities) and Arabic (MELC)
Nora Melhem, International Relations and Global Studies
Anannya Chaturvedi, International Relations | Psychology
Harshal Zalke, Master of Global Policy Studies
Grace Mappes, International Relations and Global Studies | English
Justin Ahamed, Government
Brandon Podojil, Masters of Public Affairs
Yucong Yang, Linguistics
Nicky Pownall, International Relations and Global Studies
Rachel Rosenberg, Master of Global Policy
Roma Shah, Finance
Sara Lowe, International Relations | Government
Brian Folkers, Government
Caroline Lewin, Anthropology and International Relations & Global Studies
Kate Weaver, Public Affairs | Bureaucracy Master
Carter Adams, Government
Mackenzie Sanderson, MA Global Policy
Ayu Sofyan, International Relations & Global Studies
Meena Pyatt, International Relations
Ishani Pandya, Government
Emil Shabanov, Economics
Raymond Weyandt, MA Public Affairs
Avery Leake, Mathematics | Plan II
Carlos Tellez, International Relations
Christine Kelly, Plan II Honors | International Relations and Global Studies
Cole Alley, Economics
Jenna Hetsko, International Relations & Global Studies
Jared Hrebenar, Government | International Relations | Economics | Chinese
Devika Kumar, International Relations | Economics | Plan II Honors

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Jonah Isaac, History | Middle Eastern Language | Culture
Ananya Dwivedi, Economics and History
Michael Kiel, MA Global Policy Studies
Rohin Balkundi, Economics
Evan Pan, Canfield Business Honors | Government
Fredrick Sjodin, Economics
Caroline Woodman, International Relations
Olivia Brown, Master of Global Policy Studies
Lydia Moss, International Relations | French
Paige Johnson, International Relations
JP Reppeto, Government | Plan II
Tyler Morrow, MAGlobal Policy Studies
Rebeca Marichalar, Government | International Relations
David Zulli, International Relations | Anthropology
Iulia Tothezan, International Relations & Global Studies | Liberal Arts Honors
Kaitlin Moe, International Relations | History
Meredith Pelt, International Relations and Global Studies
Taryn Shanes, Plan II | International Relations
Lisa Vasek, Economics
Prem Roopani, Finance
Dorothy Isgur, Sociology
William Wallock, Plan II | Quantitative Finance
Janet McLaren, Master of Global Public Policy
Ethan Masucoil, International Relations &
Global Studies | Plan II | Chinese

David De Diego Chao, Government |
International Relations

Calvin Thrall, PhD Government

Mitchell Foght, Anthropology | Plan II | MELC

Ana Pedraza, International
Relations/Government/Latin American Studies

Evelyn Cai, Business

Ronak Shah, Finance

Samantha Jorgensen, MGPS

Radhika Patel, Economics

Marissa Marinello, Master of Public Affairs |

Khadeja Javed, International Relations | MES

Erica Colston, International Relations and
Global Studies | History

Faridhe Yamelli Puente, Sociology

Shristi Singh, Economics

Alexandra Martinez, Government | Philosophy

Mishan Kara, International Business

Anita Basavaraju, Public Health

Britta Thompson, High School
Internship Highlights: Summer 2019

As part of our commitment to providing meaningful professional development and applied research experience, IPD provides support for students seeking professional internships. Each year, we help to place, and often fund (in collaboration with our grant partners), many students in high-impact positions around the world. Below are some highlights of our 2019 placements.

**Mishan Kara**, Department of Justice Office of Foreign Litigation, *Washington D.C.*

Mishan Kara interned in Washington DC at the Department of Justice Office of Foreign Litigation the summer after her freshman year. Mishan is a sophomore majoring in International Business and minoring in Arabic. Working in DC gave her great exposure to the field of international law as she worked on organizing cases, requesting foreign evidence, and conducting research in the Library of Congress. This experience helped her decide to pursue Arabic and Middle Eastern studied within her major. Her favorite aspect of her summer in DC was exploring the city and museums on the weekends.

**Devika Kumar**, Security and Political Economy (SPEC) Lab, *Los Angeles*

Devika is a third-year International Relations and Global Studies, Economics, and Plan II Honors major here at UT Austin. She spent this past summer as a research assistant at the Security and Political Economy (SPEC) Lab at the University of Southern California, under the direction of Dr. Benjamin Graham. As a part of the Power-sharing Team, Devika and other RAs worked to code 26 diverse variables that demonstrate and explain variation in power-sharing institutions that exist in countries around the world. In this first stage of the project, the undergraduate research team has begun to extend the data while providing invaluable feedback for refining the codebook. Devika read constitutions, tax codes, and a number of different reports to add to the dataset, and gained a newfound understanding of governance through her experience.
Taryn Shanes & Francesca T D'annunzio, *Ubongo, Tanzania*

**Taryn Shanes**, a Plan II and International Relations & Global Studies major spent the summer of 2019 interning at Ubongo in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. She contributed to Ubongo's mission of providing accessible, engaging edutainment to kids across Africa by working on the pre-production and grant-writing teams. Throughout the summer, Taryn conducted research on expansion projects, edited grant applications, pitched episode content ideas, and even wrote a song about “always foods” and “sometimes foods” for the Akili and Me series. She also systematized the international intern intake process and created alphabet scripts to be translated into Swahili. Taryn and her fellow IPDer, Francesca, climbed Mount Kilimanjaro together at the end of their internship and sang the Ubongo Kids theme song the whole way up!

**Francesca D'Annunzio**, an investigative journalism and Arabic major joined Ubongo this summer as a Marketing, Pre-Production, and Grant Writing Intern. She researched and wrote white papers, newsletters, press kits, and other marketing materials. In addition to helping the Marketing Team with writing, she also collaborated with wonderful Grant and Pre-Production Teams with the writing process for grant applications and to brainstorming meetings, writing scripts and songs for Ubongo's shows.

**Tanya A Raghu**, U.S. State Department, *Jordan*
Tanya is a second-year Plan II Honors, Middle Eastern Studies, and Arabic major at the University of Texas at Austin. She serves as the Diversity board member of the Plan II Student Association and has previously interned in the Texas State House of Representatives and currently the World Affairs Councils of Austin. Before starting at UT, she lived in Jordan for six weeks to begin learning Arabic through the U.S. State Department NSLI-Y (National Security Language Initiative for Youth) Program. In Summer 2019 due to IPD funding, she was able to intern at the World Affairs Council of Dallas/Fort Worth in the Programs department. Her responsibilities included editing, writing remarks, and assisting with numerous events including Jonna Mendez, the CIA former Chief of Disguise, and the Prime Minister of Georgia. Her internship reaffirmed her interest in seeking a career in foreign affairs, allowed her to expand her network, and complemented her coursework at UT with real-life experience.

Jade Tucker, Veev, Singapore

Jade Tucker, is a senior majoring in International Relations and Global Studies spent the summer interning at Veev Interactive’s main headquarters in Singapore. Veev is an educational technology company that partners with educators, administrators, and other professionals to deliver engaging and customized learning digital content. She worked as a quality check specialist on international projects such as a well-known education, publication firm targeting Chinese students and course instruction for the National University of Singapore. Jade mastered her skills in presentation, analyzing and synthesizing her critiques on projects that go through her before its final submission to the client. She simultaneously worked on projects from lesson plans for elementary students to marketing analysis on a university level. She also assisted her supervisor on side consultation and on-going assignments. Jade investigated Singapore’s law and policies on global brands and restricted content displayed for public access. Through her work, she coordinated and strategized with co-workers of diverse nationalities and religious backgrounds. During her time in Singapore, she received an opportunity to interact with the locals through volunteering with a non-profit soup kitchen and with a lawyer at a pro-bono clinic.

Adityamohan Tantravahi, Summer IPD Lab

Adityamohan Tantravahi, is a graduating senior majoring in Economics and Government spent Summer 2018 working on an IPD funded project building Condata.World. Condata is a web-based tool for accessible remote sensing software based on cloud technologies and machine learning processing of satellite imagery. He worked with numerous tools like Django, giving him the opportunity to develop his python programming skills as well as learn the AWS cloud infrastructure.
IPD Alumni: Where are they now?

IPD is proud that we now have over 500 alumni from our research team. Each year, we feature two of our IPD graduates to learn more about what they are doing now and how IPD has helped them in their post-graduate career.

Jacqueline Homann
MA in Global Policy Studies, 2015
IPD Graduate Research Fellow, Communications Team Leader

What are you currently working on?
I work for the State Department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs. I manage foreign assistance resources and programs to Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan, and the South Asia region.

Why did you join IPD?
I joined IPD because the maps are cool and I was intrigued by geocoding.

What kinds of skills did you acquire during your time with IPD and what have you found most useful for your post-graduate career?
IPD gave me some really important skills that I apply directly to my current job. Most importantly, IPD helped shape the way I think about how researchers and the public see and use assistance. When I was at IPD we used open source data to map sub-national project locations. Now that I'm on the other side of managing projects I understand how important it is when I get asked to respond to data calls, including for platforms like foreignassistance.gov. Thanks to IPD I also understand the power of maps and have worked with some of our implementers to make reporting on sub-national location data a priority. I'm always trying to tell the story of our projects to leadership at the State Department, and visualizations can be a big help.

What would you tell a student about why they should join IPD?
IPD provides an opportunity to think in depth about the development field through the lens of data. As someone now working in development, this perspective has been immensely helpful to many parts of my job, especially program design, and monitoring and evaluation.

What is your most valuable advice for IPD researchers entering the job market/graduating from UT?
The coursework I completed at UT was really helpful when applying for my current job, and helped demonstrate specific geographic knowledge. During my interview I referenced two projects I did while at UT - a report on gender based violence in Sri Lanka for Kate Weaver's Development Policy course and a mapping project on the Sri Lankan census for my GIS course. So I guess my advice is the work you do at LBJ can help you get a job so don't be afraid to show it off!
What are you currently working on?

I'm currently working as a consultant at the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services conducting an evaluation of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel. Before that, I worked as a consultant with Results for Development, where I supported the design, planning, and coordination of small-scale evaluations related to open governance of extractive industries (oil, gas, and mining) in Peru and Nigeria.

What kinds of skills did you acquire during your time with IPD and what have you found most useful for your post-graduate career?

Most of the skills that I have now were developed or strengthened through my work at IPD. I had my first exposure to data cleaning, analysis, and visualization programs such as ArcGIS, R, Stata, Excel, and OpenRefine, all of which I've used extensively in my post-graduate career. I learned how to write a good resume, cover letter, and apply for jobs through the professional development workshops at IPD. I gained strong organizational, time-management, planning, and coordination skills during my time as Program Manager and co-team leader of two teams. Lastly, I developed strong oral and visual communication skills through the many workshops I prepared and developed for IPD research affiliates on subjects including data cleaning, monitoring and evaluation methods, geocoding, mapping, and geospatial statistics.

What is your most valuable advice for incoming IPD researchers?

Take it seriously! IPD pays off later in the form of professional connections, employable skills, and access to internships and job opportunities. The more you dedicate to IPD, the more you will get out of it. Not only did I receive a ton of support from the IPD directors when searching for jobs, I've also been able to count on a large network of IPD alumni. The fact that you were involved in IPD is an instant green flag for those in the IPD alumni network, and they will very likely help you when you are looking for jobs, internships, and fellowships even if they do not know you.

What was your most valuable experience in IPD?

Spending time with Mike and Kate (love y'all).

What advice do you have for IPD researchers entering the job market/graduating from UT?

Reach out to other IPD alumni, add them on LinkedIn, email them and set up informational interviews, and sign up for the IPD mailing list so you can continue to hear about internship and job opportunities.
IPD-Supported Research

Academic Journal Articles (2018-2019)


Academic Book Chapters (2018-2019)


Baggerman, Jill, Michael Findley, Sarah Spaulding, Catherine Weaver, Joshua Evans, and Juan Lozano. 2019. “Chinese Aid and Foreign Investment in South Sudan: Prospects for Cooperation on Conflict Resolution.” Report for the United States Institute for Peace (USIP).


Weaver, Catherine. 2019. “America will lose influence, not gain it, if Trump wins the fight over the World Bank presidency.” Washington Post Monkey Cage, 15 February 2019.

External Funding

USAID High Education Solutions Network: $25 million consortium award (IPD sub-award of $920,000), 2013-2018

AidData Center for Development Policy

In November 2012, USAID announced the creation of the Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN), a multidisciplinary research and development effort that encourages cooperation between development professionals and academia. A $25 million USAID HESN grant enabled the creation of the AidData Center for Development Policy, a joint venture between IPD (subaward: $920,000), the College of William & Mary, Development Gateway, Brigham Young University, and ESRI.

The AidData Center for Development Policy provides geospatial data and tools that enable the global development community to more effectively target, coordinate, and evaluate aid. Working in partnership with USAID country missions, host governments, and civil society groups, the Center pinpoints the precise geographic locations of development projects and creates subnational maps and dashboards that overlay geocoded project data with spatial data on poverty, disease, violence, environmental degradation, and governance. These data and tools make it possible to visualize and analyze where funds are going at the subnational level compared to the areas of greatest need and opportunity, which in turn facilitates analysis of aid effectiveness.

US Department of Defense Minerva Initiative: $800,000 (IPD sub-award of $210,000), 2013-2018

Natural Resources and Armed Conflict

The University of North Carolina-Charlotte, in cooperation with IPD, the University of Albany, and Pennsylvania State University, has been awarded a grant from the US Department of Defense’s Minerva Initiative, a research initiative launched by the Secretary of Defense in 2008 focusing on areas of strategic importance to US national security policy. As part of this work, members of the IPD Conflict and Development Team explore how natural resources such as oil reserves, mineral deposits, and alluvial gemstones influence the likelihood, type, and duration of armed conflict in the developing world.

The project addresses an existing deficit in knowledge by developing (1) a comprehensive, global, geocoded dataset of natural resource locations, and (2) measuring if and precisely how rebel groups control or exploit such resources. These data will enable an understanding of how variation in the degree and type of control that rebel groups exercise over resources will influence their strategies of violence.

Research Partnerships with the Cloudburst Group, 2017-2021

Together with The Cloudburst Group, IPD was recently selected to assist the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Learning Evaluation and Research (LER) unit on Democracy Rights
and Governance (DRG) activities. This project will bring a variety of partnerships, funding, and student opportunities to IPD over the coming years.

**Ubongo International: $100,000, 2017-2021**

Summer Internships in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

IPD, in collaboration with the University of Texas College of Liberal Arts, partnered with Ubongo International, a leading edu-tainment non-profit organization based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Ubongo produces and distributes animated content through broadcast television, apps, and ebooks, to help millions of children across Africa learn and love learning. With an embedded research-based curriculum that promotes literacy, numeracy, and character strengths, Ubongo cartoons are broadening the opportunities of Africa’s next generation. This funding supports IPD students each summer as they contribute their skills in research design, data analysis, product development, and marketing at Ubongo.

**United States Institute for Peace: $45,000, 2018-2019**

Chinese Investment in South Sudan

IPD is working on mapping Chinese investments in South Sudan to patterns of violent conflict. Chinese investments in South Sudan have been on the rise in recent years and have come at a time when violent conflict has been particularly acute. At the same time, China has also stepped up its involvement in peace efforts. This project will investigate possible relationships among all of these various trends, and consider whether Chinese mediation efforts have been a net positive, or otherwise serve to facilitate economic interests.

**Research Partnerships with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, 2018 - present**

IPD is working with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Center for Indian Country Development (CICD) in an especially valuable partnership. Together with the CICD and Native Nations, IPD is bringing its development expertise home, in service of Native communities in the United States. Our first collaborative project is a first-of-its-kind large scale survey of tribal members living on a reservation that is bereft of any formal bank branches, which has increased the power and prevalence of predatory lending. This project has already brought IPD members travel experiences, direct collaborations with tribal leaders, and funding opportunities. We look forward to continuing our partnership in the coming years.