

Meet the 2020-21 GPS Fellows

Erica Bower

Erica Bower is a doctoral student in the Emmett Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources (E-IPER), with who studies the outcomes and governance of climate-related human mobility, with particular focus on equity and human rights dimensions. Her current research concerns what drives 'successful' outcomes in the process of planning relocation or 'managed retreat' of entire frontline communities as an adaptation measure of last resort. Her background in addressing issues at the intersection of environmental and social justice stems from a BA in Human Rights and Sustainable Development from Columbia University, and an MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies from Oxford University. Prior to Stanford, Erica worked at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and has conducted research on climate-related human mobility for a number of UN Agencies and non-governmental organizations. She is a member of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) Advisory Committee, and hopes to connect her research findings to the development of policy and practical tools. As a GPS Fellow, Erica hopes to integrate community engagement and advocacy in the research process, to help communities and governments plan relocations that are more equitable, just and community-driven.

Brian Cabral

Brian Cabral (he/him/él) is from Chicago's Little Village neighborhood and a graduate from Oberlin College in Ohio where he received highest honors in Sociology and minored in Rhetoric and Composition. At Stanford, he is a third-year PhD student in the Race, Inequality, and Language in Education (RILE) program at the Graduate School of Education. He is concurrently working towards his master's in the Sociology department at Stanford. His research interests lie at the intersections of schooling, carcerality, and abolition to address the unique needs of students, teachers, and administrators to reimagine and restructure U.S. public education as we know it today. Brian is also involved in numerous community-engagement projects that inform his doctoral studies, which include serving as volunteer instructor of Law and Education for a Bay Area nonprofit called Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY), a volunteer community organizer for Increase the Peace (ITP) in Chicago, and a member of an ongoing project at a nearby school district that is partnered with Stanford.

Marco Antonio Flores

Marco Antonio Flores is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Art and Art History at Stanford University. He specializes in modern and contemporary art of the United States and Latin America. Flores is interested in feminist and queer theory, the archive as experience, and the metamorphoses from human to non-human forms (such as stones, trees, etc.). He also studies the presence of art as poetic materiality. Flores is a Graduate Fellow at the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity and is a recipient of the Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship. In 2019, he curated staring at the sun, a solo exhibition featuring Rafa Esparza at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art. He is currently working on an exhibition at the Williams College Museum of Art on Beatriz Cortez. His

curatorial and research projects have been supported by grants from the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute and the Bill Lane Center for the American West.

Cynthia Garcia

Cynthia García is a PhD candidate in the Modern Thought and Literature Program with a PhD minor in History. She is a recipient of the Diversifying Academia Recruiting Excellence Fellowship, the Smithsonian's Latino Museum Studies Program Fellowship, and the Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education Fellowship. Her dissertation documents how Chicanx/Latinx communities in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago respond to the violence of geographical displacement and the racial homogenization of their communities through storytelling, public art, and activism. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach, García performs close-readings of literary and historical texts, employs the tools of visual analysis, and interprets trends in demographic data. At Stanford, her social justice work has centered around community-based knowledge practices and the retention of underrepresented students. In 2016, she co-founded the Decolonial Collaborative Research Group which challenges the material, ontological, and epistemic violence of coloniality by reorienting the premises of cultural and literary scholarship towards the practice of transformational knowledge production. Throughout her graduate career, Garcia has served as a mentor for the EDGE Program, the First-Generation Low-Income Partnership, and El Centro Chicano y Latino. As a GPS Fellow, she hopes to learn new strategies for enacting public engagement work in her scholarship and future courses.

Chiara Giovanni

Chiara Giovanni is a Thomas C. Nelson Stanford Interdisciplinary Graduate Fellow and a PhD Candidate in Comparative Literature with a Minor in Anthropology. She is captivated by the ways humans desire and seek to be desired, and she is moved by the ways communities engage desire in order to imagine different worlds. Specifically, Chiara studies this through dance and literature in the Dominican Republic and Latinx America, mobilizing literary analysis and ethnography in her research. She has conducted much of her work so far in collaboration with a queer- and trans-focused Latin dance academy in Oakland, CA, helping to run the 2nd annual Queer Latin Dance Festival in 2019. Chiara lives and writes in the Sunset District of San Francisco..

Danielle Greene

Danielle Greene is currently a PhD student in the Curriculum Studies and Teacher Education (CTE) program with a focus in History/Social Science Education, and the Race, Inequality, & Language in Education (RILE) program at the Graduate School of Education. Her research centers on exploring teaching cultures and language practices within K-12 public schools that have majority African American teaching faculty, staff, and students. The focus of her work is dedicated to improving the educational circumstances of Black students through community-based research methodologies. Prior to Stanford, Danielle received her B.A. in English and History from The College of William and Mary and her M.T. in Secondary Social Studies Education from Virginia Commonwealth University – which led her to an extremely rewarding career as a public middle school teacher. As a GPS Fellow, Danielle looks forward to further developing and integrating an ethic of scholar-activism into her work through a community-engaged lens.

Rhana Hashemi

Rhana Hashemi is a MS candidate in the Community Health Prevention Research Program (CHPR) at the School of Medicine. She is studying how to enhance the effectiveness of public health drug prevention and education strategies for youth. Rhana graduated with a B.A. in Social Welfare from UC Berkeley with Honors and was the President of their Students for Sensible Drug Policy chapter. She co-founded the Center for Political Drug Education in 2016 where she today leads culturally-relevant drug education programs for school districts and community partners such as Oakland Unified School District and SF Department of Public Health. As a GPS fellow, Rhana is excited to build an advisory board to ensure her research findings are actionable for communities working to transform racially disproportionate drug policies and provide opportunities for young people to heal.

Shan Huang

Shan Huang is a PhD candidate in Anthropology broadly interested in the cultural politics of urban development and contemporary social movements. His dissertation examines how Hong Kong government's developmental schemes are confronted by grassroots actions aimed at democratizing urban planning and promoting alternative urban futures. An ethnographic account of Hong Kong's political culture in the post-Handover era, it also seeks to reflect on urbanism of our times. Since 2017, he has been a member of an oral history project based in a village in Lantau Island, which is under significant pressure of Hong Kong's largest land reclamation project in nearby waters. He joins a miscellaneous group of local residents, visiting citizens, and community organizers to conduct interviews and weave together environmental and cultural narratives that aim at expanding the public imagination of land, history, and local identity. Recently, he coordinated a series of essays for Society for Cultural Anthropology reflecting on global protests in 2019 and anthropology's role in studying social movements.

Sophia Hunt

Sophia Hunt is a researcher, advocate and storyteller from Charlottesville, Virginia. Sophia is devoted to advancing racial equity in the United States. Sophia has worked for numerous non-profit entities, including the ACLU, the Boys & Girls Club, the Center for Court Innovation, and Mayor Mitch Landrieu's organization, E Pluribus Unum. She recently completed her B.A. in History & Literature at Harvard College. Now, Sophia is pursuing a PhD in sociology at Stanford University and will start at Harvard Law School in the fall of 2021. She currently studies inequality, the family, and racial stratification, focusing on how individuals develop attitudes towards race and the law. Through her time at Unum Fund, Sophia has and continues to work on community-engaged research projects dedicated to advancing economic opportunity and racial equity in South. Down the line, Sophia plans to use research-informed practices to further advocate for racial justice in the United States.

Timothy Jones II

Tim is a PhD student in Theater and Performance Studies with intersecting research interests in race, sexuality, aesthetics of risk, socio-political choreographies, performance ethnography, visual culture, and memory. He is primarily interested in the Black male body in undervalued movement and performance practices (BDSM, erotic film & dancing, fraternal stepping & strolling, bodybuilding,

protests, roller disco, cosmetology, vogue & walking the balls). Most recently, Tim worked on an ethnography project which looked at Black male sex workers and digital performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to studying at Stanford, Tim earned an MFA in Theatre Management and Producing from Columbia University as well as a BA in English and a BA in Drama from Morehouse College. Outside of his academic work, Tim is involved in homeless and foster care advocacy. Additionally, as a former senior-level administrator for the NHPS, Tim was responsible for creating the Co-Op Arts Mobile Unit, which brought free art performances and performance-making workshops into the Greater New Haven Community. He also founded the Connecticut Regional August Wilson Monologue Contest (now managed by LWT & Yale Rep), which invites high school students from all over the state of Connecticut to learn and perform the works of famed American playwright August Wilson.

Kengthsagn Louis

Kengthsagn Louis is a 3rd year Ph.D. Student in Psychology. She investigates how different cultural factors and mindsets influence overall health, health behaviors, and institutional policies in different communities. In her work, she aims to collaborate with understudied communities to understand their ways of being and how that has helped them to maintain their health or craft a culture of health, create sustainable social structures, and fight health inequalities. In short, she wants to partner with communities to see what they are doing well and how to harness these strengths to optimize their health and growth. Kengthsagn is eager to learn how to: maintain ethical relationships with the communities engaged in her work and effectively disseminate the findings in academia and the communities she collaborates with. In the last five years, she has worked with the Haitian community, to help improve girls' education, specifically scientific literacy, by pioneering a science laboratory project for a public school. At Stanford, she has served as a representative of her department in the Wellness Information Network for Graduate Students (WINGS) program and co-taught a social psychology course in the summer. Currently, she serves a fundraising co-chair in the Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA).

Kristin McFadden

Kristin McFadden is a PhD student in Anthropology at Stanford. She is broadly interested in classifications of citizenship, nationhood, and legal/political participation in African American communities in the rural American South. Her current research centers on black land dispossession in the American South and uses the legal categorization of heirs property to examine the precarity of black land ownership and the political and state mechanisms within legal categorization that both open and foreclose black landowners' economic and legal positions. Kristin received her B.A. from Emory University in African American Studies and Cultural Anthropology. Prior to coming to Stanford, Kristin worked in political organizing in rural regions of South Carolina and most recently as a Research Analyst for the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs, where her research ranged from studying explanatory factors for school expulsion to studying barriers to college access for minority populations in South Carolina. As a GPS fellow, Kristin is looking forward to exploring the theoretical and methodological tenets of community engaged scholarship and excited to further incorporate them in her work.

Miguel Novelo Cruz

Miguel Novelo is an interdisciplinary artist from Campeche, Mexico, whose practice explores the contemporary use of language, the ambiguity of translations, the space in memories, and the aesthetics of miscommunication. Novelo uses new media, interactivity, and expanded cinema to create immersive sound and expanded image experiences that generate participatory storytelling platforms. As an MFA candidate in Art Practice at Stanford, his research focuses on live communication, media translations, and speculative futurism, specifically for Southern Mexico. Since 2013, Novelo has been actively exploring intersections between communication, creativity, and civic engagement through filmmaking workshops, speculative projects, and a community-centered film festival. Before Stanford, Novelo was awarded the Fundación Pablo García scholarship twice. He graduated from San Francisco Art Institute with honors, receiving a bachelor's degree in Film and a minor in Art and Technology. As a GPS Fellow, Novelo wants to formalize his research on media literacy and cultural empowerment to foster community-driven changes in how inhabitants from the Yucatan, Mexico understand and act on their future, culture, and power of their voices.

Matthew Randolph

Matthew A. Randolph is a storyteller and community-builder with a passion for using history to inspire and empower others while pushing for social change. As a PhD student in History at Stanford University, he focuses on the intertwined history of the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean with a focus on shifting dynamics of race and ethnicity across national borders. His current research centers on the global dimensions of the Black Panther Party, illuminating connections between the San Francisco Bay Area and the wider world since the 1960s. He hopes his research encourages all scholars to appreciate the past, present, and future of the African diaspora. Beyond academia, Matthew has dedicated himself to causes for public history, human rights, and social justice in the Bay Area and throughout the Americas. Prior to studying at Stanford, Matthew earned his B.A. in History and Spanish from Amherst College in Massachusetts. From 2016 to 2018, he worked at Asylum Access, an international human rights organization that helps refugees rebuild their lives around the world. He has also worked as a volunteer and research fellow at the African American Museum and Library at Oakland, supporting virtual field trip initiatives for local youth.

Brandi Ransom

Brandi Ransom is a PhD candidate in Materials Engineering. Brandi's research interests are in materials discovery and she is passionate about using her skills to identify environmentally friendly materials to replace conventional plastics. Brandi is additionally a recipient of the Stanford Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education (EDGE) Doctoral Fellowship, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (NSF-GRFP), and Knight Hennessey Fellowship. Additionally, Brandi is a leader in the Black Engineering Graduate Student Association and a Peer Learning Consultant. She tutors regularly and believes volunteering is a must! Prior to studying at Stanford, Brandi earned her B.S. in Materials Science and Nanoengineering at Rice University. As a GPS Fellow, Brandi is excited to develop a framework for researching with affected populations in mind, hopefully affecting language around applications and goals in scientific publications. Outside of her academic work, Brandi enjoys baking without recipes, attempting novice level gymnastics, and growing plants.

Jacob Ritchie

Jacob Ritchie is a second-year Ph.D. student in the Computer Science Department at Stanford University. Previously, he received a M.Sc. in Computer Science and a B.A.Sc. in Engineering Science from the University of Toronto. His current research projects focus on computational tools for mental health support, computational journalism and information visualization. In Toronto, Jacob worked with several community-based organizations including Climate Justice Toronto, The Fight For 15 & Fairness, and Tech Workers Coalition. At Stanford he has been active in volunteering with the Stanford Young Democratic Socialists of America (participating in the campaign to Stop The Mountain View RV Ban) as well as the Computer Science and Civil Society student group. Jacob is interested in how tools originating in the tech industry can be re-purposed to serve the needs of communities and activists by storing community knowledge, aiding in communication and collective decision-making, and visualizing systematic injustice such as environmental racism and differential access to social services. He is also looking forward to learning from and supporting the other GPS fellows.

Catherine Sanchez

Cat Sanchez is a PhD student in Sociology with research interests in education, incarceration, and disability. Her current projects include studying the experience of community college transfers and other non-traditional students in higher education and looking at how the militarization of police departments has affected arrest rates in rural areas. Outside of academics, Cat is the co-chair of the Board on Judicial Affairs and the Stanford Disability Initiative, also serving as the co-leader of the Wellness Information Network for Graduate Students. As a GPS Fellow, Cat is looking forward to connecting with other community-engaged researchers and gaining the skills and insight to be a valuable community partner.

Meghan Shea

Meghan Shea is a PhD student in the Emmett Interdisciplinary Program in Environment & Resources (EIPER) working to advance tools and methods for using environmental DNA (eDNA) to characterize marine biodiversity. Her work, at the intersection of biological oceanography and science & technology studies, aims to center the human context of eDNA monitoring: how do we think about eDNA data, how does this data interact with other forms of knowledge, and how can stakeholders be better engaged in the process? Prior to starting her PhD, Meghan earned a BS in Environmental Systems Engineering at Stanford and an MPhil in Nature, Society & Environmental Governance at the University of Oxford. As a GPS Fellow, she is excited to develop ways of using eDNA for community science and advocacy, and ultimately build toward a career in community-engaged marine research and teaching. Outside of her academic work, Meghan plays in a steel pan band, cares for a small jungle of house plants, and loves growing and cooking fun vegetables.

Jessica Stovall

Jessica Stovall is a doctoral student in the Race, Inequality, and Language in Education program at Stanford University's Graduate School of Education and a Teaching Fellow for Stanford University's Teacher Education Program (STEP). She is also a Graduate Fellow in Social Justice and Community Engagement at the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE), where she runs the Praxis Fellowship in Community Engagement, Advocacy and Social Change. She is a recipient of the Stanford Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education (EDGE) Doctoral Fellowship, the Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship, and the Fulbright Distinguished Award in Teaching. Her current research

partners with the Black Teacher Project (BTP) in Oakland to explore Black teacher retention through examining how discourses of storytelling and ratification in Black teacher affinity groups reverse Black teacher attrition. Her previous work examined how teacher empathy can work to eliminate the racial predictability of student academic achievement. Before beginning her Ph.D., she received her B.A. at the University of Wisconsin--Madison, earned her M.A. in Literature at Northwestern University, and taught English Language Arts for over a decade.

Zoé VanGelder

My name is Zoé VanGelder (she/they). I'm French-USAian, born in Paris and raised between France/US/Puerto Rico/Costa Rica. I'm starting my second year of the PhD in socio-cultural anthropology after over a decade of working on advocacy and research around "rural sustainable development." I did impact evaluations using very quantitative methods with the Jameel Abdul Latif Poverty Action Lab for a few years in different places- Morocco, Philippines, and Mexico. Disillusioned with the top-down nature of Development, I switched gears to work with an agrarian social movement in Mexico, doing participatory research and advocacy around agroecology and food sovereignty. That work centered older male peasant farmers and pushed me to think more critically about how radical social movements can marginalize dissenting and diverse voices. I also worked for Oxfam doing research-based advocacy on gender equality, agroecology, and extractive industries in the LAC region. My last job was with a Mexican feminist think-tank, where I accompanied women and youth from several different agrarian social movements and community-forestry organizations. We collaborated on research that supported their accessing resources and power in decision-making spaces. My research, as its currently conceived, picks up on some the lessons from these experiences as I explore how our concepts of work are shifting, along with our notions of governance, in the Anthropocene/Capitalocene. I want to explore ethnography as an emancipatory method and am currently collaborating with a group indigenous youth (18-35) I've been organizing with as they attempt to shape public programs aimed at revitalizing rural economies in Mexico and strengthening their communities' climate resilience

Alexis Wilson

Alexis Wilson was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. She graduated with a B.S. in Environmental and Sustainability Sciences from Cornell University. She is a PhD student in the department of Earth System Science at Stanford EARTH. She studies the intersection of soil biogeochemistry, climate change, and environmental justice. Her passion lies in understanding and combating environmental racism and climate injustices on local and global scales. Alexis' current research focuses on soil contamination in urban gardens, particularly in marginalized communities. She aims to identify and remediate soil contamination for safe access to healthy produce. As a scientist and environmental justice activist, it is crucial to form meaningful and reciprocal partnerships with the communities most impacted by environmental issues. Alexis is committed to mentoring underrepresented students and is working to make the STEM field more accessible and inclusive of all people. She has been a part of several mentorship programs and taught classes on social identity, systems of oppression, and intergroup dialogue. She is currently the social chair on the Black Graduate Student Association's executive board to build community and support social activism efforts at Stanford. Through her work she hopes to create a more just, sustainable, and equitable world.

Adary Zhang

Ada Zhang is a second-year medical student at Stanford who is interested in global health and community-centered care in queer and trans communities around the world. They recognize that the medical-industrial complex is the source of much harm to their communities and are working toward a future where they can truly “do no harm” as a physician by naming and addressing structural problems as the root cause of health inequities.