

Participant Biographies



Katia R. Avilés Vázquez
Universidad de Puerto Rico at Cayey



Kelsey Brain is a PhD Candidate in Geography and Women's Studies at the Pennsylvania State University. She situates her work within feminist human-environment geography, drawing particularly on black feminist, decolonial, and feminist political ecology theory. Her research has a Latin America regional focus. Kelsey recently returned from 11 months of dissertation fieldwork in the Caribbean region of Costa Rica, where she is examining the impacts of "global amenity migration" on the local Afro-descendant population. Since the mid-2000s the region has received an influx of amenity migrants, relatively wealthy, usually white individuals from the U.S., Canada, and Europe who relocate to destinations in the Global South in search of a different lifestyle at lower living costs. In her field site, Kelsey is investigating the impacts of this migration on access to land and housing, livelihood opportunities, and decision-making power for the Afro-descendant population who has lived in the area for generations.



Alex Colucci grew up on Long Island in New York state. He received my MA in geography from Kent State University in 2013 and BA in geography from the State University of New York (SUNY) at New Paltz in 2010 with a minor in environmental studies. He is currently finishing my Ph.D. in geography at Kent State. Since completing his undergraduate studies his interests have included, broadly, political and cultural geographies. Alex's dissertation research has two main directions. First, examining the material spaces and geographies of capital punishment in the context of the political and economic logics of valuation and differentiation. Second, the research is situated in the context of fluid epistemologies, based on recent developments in radical/critical geographic thought, to develop an analytic framework for producing knowledge going forward. Alex has taught a variety of courses at Kent State, and is passionate about developing critical thinking skills with students while sharing with them insights into the world that come from developing a spatially informed, geographic understanding of it.



Kalli Doubleday is a first-generation college student from rural Texas and recent PhD recipient from UT-Austin, May 2018, in geography. Her work primarily falls into the umbrella term "conservation social science," where she utilizes qualitative methods and grounded theory to address power, patriarchy, and social justice in conservation landscapes. Being pro-people and pro-conservation is difficult where Kalli works in India where she'd like to develop strategies to better engage the public, NGOs, and police makers.



Claudia García-Louis is assistant professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. She draws from over six years of student affairs experience in order to bridge theory to practice and back again. Her core values as an educator are to uphold social justice, equity, and respect at all times with an emphasis on the mastery of knowledge. She has facilitated numerous social justice workshops and consistently mediates difficult conversations within her classroom. Through her research she seeks to disrupt deficit thinking about communities of color, disadvantaged populations, and underrepresented students. Her goals are to expand the definitions of Latinidad and Blackness in higher education, to make a critical contribution to a newly formed line of inquiry that explores the educational experiences of AfroLatinxs, and to conduct research that highlights Latinx heterogeneity.

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Alexandra Giancarlo graduated with her PhD in Geography (2017) from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada and is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at Brandon University in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada. Her research interests include memory and representation, racial politics, black history, cultural identity, and disability studies. Email address: Alexandra.giancarlo@gmail.com.



Rachel Goffe is a human geographer and a licensed architect who holds the Postdoctoral Fellow in Black Geographies, Department of Geography and Urban Studies at Temple University. Her research focuses on the relationships between the built environment, land rights, livelihood, and how these relationships structure and are structured by the racial capitalist state. She has done research in Jamaica, where she is originally from, and in Philadelphia, where she has lived for many years. Through ethnographic research in informal settlements in Jamaica, she investigated the enactment of new policy regarding squatting and how that process was shaped by regional traditions and the engagement of residents with varied aspects of the state—from social welfare to enforcement agencies. In Philadelphia, Rachel worked with community organizations struggling with dispossession, shrinking public services, and low wages. Residents articulated alternative visions for the city through radio and video pieces. Rachel supported this work through research, education, and GIS analysis. Recent publications include “Annihilation of Space by Media: Making Connections Through a Fragmented Neoliberal Landscape,” a chapter regarding the uses of independent media to cohere disparate organizing efforts in Philadelphia. Rachel received a Ph.D. from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.



Kevin Lynn's first career was in inner city, family, and elderly affordable housing development and finance. He has worked in the public sector for the City of Detroit Planning and Development Department and for the District Of Columbia Housing Finance Agency and has worked in the private sector for AIMCO, a Fortune 500, publicly traded, apartment real estate investment trust. Kevin has also worked with the homeless for the nonprofit Plymouth Housing Group in downtown Seattle, WA. He enjoyed his previous career but felt it was time for a change. Kevin actually grew up in two college towns (Ypsilanti, MI and Ann Arbor, MI) and knew a few professors' kids so becoming a professor had always been in the back of my mind as a potential career. Kevin's research primarily looks at the nexus of urban and environmental issues.



Aaron Malone is a PhD candidate in Geography at the University of Colorado, and completed an M.A. in Geography from Ohio University. Aaron's central research interest is to understand how migration patterns and migration policies are grounded in place. For his dissertation, this takes the form of examining a migration-for-development policy in Mexico and analyzing how differences in translocal contexts of migration origin, destination, history, and patterns have produced dramatic variations in policy implementation. In a new project, preliminary results of which will be presented at the REP Conference, he is part of a team examining outcomes of the DACA program in Colorado. The focus in this research is on the role of place and context of reception. Specifically, they compare how DACA recipients' outcomes and experiences vary across destination community types – urban, agricultural, and mountain-amenity areas.



Dr. Jamila Moore Pewu is Assistant Professor of digital humanities and new media in history at California State University, Fullerton. As a cultural and digital historian Dr. Moore Pewu creates physical and virtual gathering spaces for scholars and community members to engage with the public digital humanities (DH). Her current projects encompass the diverse fields of Black Atlantic studies, architectural history/theory, African and African American history, and cultural geography. Moore Pewu serves as project director for Mapping Arts OC, a public humanities project that digitally maps the lives and times of underrepresented artists in Orange County. She also serves as co-curator and chief digital curator for the Restoration and Reunion exhibit in Bridgeport CT, which brings scholars and underrepresented artist together for the first time to interpret the history of a forgotten nineteenth century African diasporic historic site. As an active and engaged scholar, two critical research objectives include increasing opportunities for first generation college students within DH, and utilizing digital tools for investigation, intervention and eventually the creation of new born digital content and resources for the historically marginalized public sphere.



Carmen Mosley was born and raised in San Diego, California. She completed her bachelor's degree in anthropology at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and her master's degree in biological anthropology at the University of New Mexico. Currently, she is a Ph.D. Candidate in anthropology at the University of New Mexico. She is also the Collections and Lab Manager of Human Osteology at the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Carmen's research focuses on the sociocultural and biological factors that shape health risk in New Mexicans of Spanish-speaking descent.



Carrie Mott is in the first year of a TT Assistant Professor position at the University of Louisville after completing her PhD in 2016 at the University of Kentucky and spending a couple years as an Instructor at Rutgers. Her research looks at the spatial dimensions of racialized conflict and she is particularly interested in the micropolitics of inter-racial encounter: the everyday, the ordinary, the structural and infrastructural, and so on. Carrie has looked at this through her dissertation work on the Arizona border, which involved working with differently racialized activist groups and trying to understand the micro dimensions of conflict and collaboration within larger networks of activists on the AZ/Sonora border. Currently Carrie is involved in a new project based in the US Pacific Northwest (where she is from originally) that examines the connections between access to Columbia Basin waters (rivers, creeks, and irrigation routes) and racial conflict, particularly between Native American communities and whites. Other things of note: Carrie also write on the politics of knowledge production in geography from an anti-racist and feminist lens and has had some experience dealing with alt-right and white supremacist harassment.



Solange Muñoz's research interests are deeply rooted in personal and intellectual concerns with political, economic, and socio-spatial processes of marginalization and contestation. Solange's current research projects center around these broad issues through an exploration of how the poor struggle to live and remain in the city despite government practices and policies and economic structures that exclude them from access to formal housing. Employing qualitative and ethnographic methods, she addresses social dimensions of urban development by examining how struggles for access to housing and to remain in the city are routinely lived and experienced by poor urban populations and the social organizations that represent them.



Magie M Ramirez is a Chicana feminist urban geographer, whose work explores the interstices of racial capitalism, art-activism and urban space. In 2017 she completed her PhD in Geography at the University of Washington and is currently based at Stanford University as a Creative Cities Fellow. Her current project documents the ways that artists of color disrupt discourses of gentrification, redevelopment, and state violence in Oakland, California through their art and activism, producing counter-topographies of the city they call home. She is also a founding member of the Latinx Geographies Specialty Group, and currently serves as the Secretary-Treasurer. Otherwise she is engaged in anti-colonial and anti-displacement work in Oakland, and spends her days mothering two small humans.



Kaitlin Reed (Yurok/Hupa/Oneida) is an enrolled member of the Yurok Tribe in northwestern California. She obtained her B.A. degree in Geography at Vassar College and her M.A. degree in Native American Studies at the University of California, Davis. Kaitlin is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Native American Studies at UC Davis. Her dissertation is entitled From Gold Rush to Green Rush: Marijuana Cultivation on Yurok Tribal Lands and examines the ecological and cultural impacts of marijuana cultivation on Yurok tribal lands, with a focus on tribal sovereignty and environmental justice. This dissertation connects the historical and ecological dots between the Gold Rush and the Green Rush, focusing on capitalistic resource extraction and violence against indigenous lands and bodies.

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Kevon Rhiney is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography, Rutgers University. His research is situated at the nexus of critical development studies, human-environment geography and political ecology. Current research explores the socio-ecological and justice dimensions of global environmental change as well as the science-policy interface shaping climate change adaptation efforts in the Caribbean. A major thrust of this research is to expand and enhance the literature on climate change for the Caribbean, highlighting the shifting and highly uneven nature of the region's vulnerability within the context of its longstanding and continued exposure to extreme climate events and forces of global economic change. Particular attention is paid to both the practical and discursive dimensions of vulnerability, and the specific ways the term has been understood and framed in relation to other crosscutting themes such as adaptation and resilience in the broader academic literature.



Mark Rhodes is a 4th year doctoral student and Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Geography at Kent State University where he is currently working on his dissertation which is attempting to understand identity and memorialization in Wales through the processes of the National Museum Wales, the National Eisteddfod, and the capital city of Cardiff. Besides his dissertation, Mark also keeps up with his trumpet, serving as principal trumpet in the Kent State Orchestra was especially enjoyable, and he is going into his 6th year working with the Kent State Graduate Student Senate. At Kent, Mark primarily teach Geography of Europe and Geography of the United States and Canada. His research focuses on memory, culture, and landscape in the United States, Wales, and Cambodia. Mark's Master's thesis looked at ways Paul Robeson is represented on the memorial landscape of Wales. Some other projects include understanding the commemoration (or lack thereof) of common labor along the Ohio and Erie Canal, memorialization and music production during and in the wake of the Cambodian Genocide, and guest editing a special issue of the Geographical Bulletin on the geographies of Star Trek. Basically, anything at the intersection of history and culture spikes Mark's interest.



Ana Sanchez-Rivera is a first-generation student from an economically disadvantaged family and a product of the public education system. She graduated from the University of Puerto Rico, with a double major in Psychology and Geography. Her undergraduate research was based on the cognitive processes involved in skin color discrimination. She completed her MA in Multicultural Geography at SUNY Binghamton. Her thesis was about how Whiteness's patterns changed by places in PR and the importance of these when identifying xenophobic attitudes against Dominicans living in the Island. She is currently a Ph.D. Candidate at the Geography Department. Her work expands on the Identity Process Theory and its position about people-place relationships. Her study focuses explicitly on how places created by the government and, the narratives told about them, influence racial, ethnic and national identity in Puerto Rico.



Stevie Ruiz is an assistant professor in the Department of Chicana/o Studies. Stevie's research and teaching interests center upon environmental justice, comparative ethnic studies, and critical race theory. He is currently completing his book manuscript entitled, *Stewards of the Land: Race, Space, and Environmental Justice*.



Edgar Sandoval is currently a Ph.D. Candidate at the Department of Geography at the University of Washington-Seattle. His previous research projects engaged with anti-LGBTQ homicides and social movements in Brazil and place-making practices for undocumented queer Latinx migrants in Seattle. Edgar's doctoral research examines how undocumented migrants navigate spatial configurations of exploitation, exclusion, and marginalization within the Chicagoland northern suburbs despite violence, with a particular interest in the role of art practices for developing an undocumented sense of place. His secondary research interests relate to world-making in relation to difference and power in popular culture.

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Pavithra Vasudevan is Assistant Professor of African & African Diaspora Studies and Women's & Gender Studies at The University of Texas at Austin. Her scholarship and teaching are concerned with how racialized peoples and landscapes are devalued in capitalism and the abolitional possibilities of collective struggle. A critical and feminist geographer, she is a member of the UT Feminist Geography Research Collective. Dr. Vasudevan earned her Ph.D. in Geography in 2018 from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Her research on racialized toxicity in aluminum production was supported by the National Science Foundation, the Society of Women Geographers, and the Center for the Study of the American South for. She has published in *Antipode* (forthcoming), *Environment and Planning D, Area, and Performance Research*, and co-authored chapters for the *Routledge Handbook of Environmental Justice* and the *Routledge International Handbook of Gender and Feminist Geographies*.



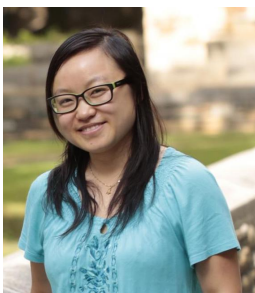
Dr. Kanika Verma is an award-winning faculty and research-scholar. Former faculty at Texas State University and Texas Christian University, Dr. Verma has received 12 awards and several other recognitions for her research, teaching, and service. Her research is focused on geospatial thinking and academic learning of undergraduate students in the United States. She has done research projects on classroom pedagogy and active learning. She has presented her research studies at more than 40 conferences. Dr. Verma has authored five peer-reviewed journal articles, two peer-reviewed book chapters, and two peer-reviewed e-books. She also serves on review and judging panels of such organizations as Geography Education Specialty Group and Ethnic Geography Specialty Group of the American Association of Geographers (AAG), National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE), Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP), Race, Ethnicity, and Place (REP), and Inspiration Masters. She holds various officer positions in the International Women's Club (IWC), All India Foundation for Peace and Disaster Management (AIFPDM), and India International Intellectual Society (IIS).



Traci-Ann Wint is a Ph.D. candidate in the African and African Diaspora Studies department at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research interests include Blackness and its commodification, tourism, collective memory, and national identity, media and representation. She is currently writing a dissertation about the ways Blackness is reimagined and repackaged for tourism and nation making in Jamaica. She holds an MA in Anthropology from UT Austin and a BA in Anthropology and Africana Studies from Vassar College and she straddles the worlds of ethnographer, media producer, writer, and educator.



Willie J. Wright is an Assistant Professor of Geography and African American Studies at Florida State University. His current research interests include the study of social movements as well as Black urban and cultural geographies, and more recently, critical pedagogy.



Shaolu Yu is currently an Assistant Professor in Urban Studies at Rhodes College. Trained as an urban geographer in an interdisciplinary background and participating in projects in urban studies in China, U.S., and Canada, she has developed a comparative and global perspective and a mixed method approach in her research on cities. Her doctoral dissertation titled "Transnationalism, Mobility and Identity: the Making of Place in Flushing, Queens, New York City" examines the paradox of transnational mobilities at the cross-national scale and immobilities at the local scale of the Chinese immigrants in urban environment. Her current research interests include: Space and Place, Race and Ethnicity, Urban Segregation, Transportation Geography and Mobility, Asian Urbanism, and Urban Planning. She is also interested in applying cartography and GIS in visualizing and analyzing spatial data. She is currently working on the project "Triangulated Between White and Black: Chinese in the South". Her teaching interests include Globalization and Cities, GIS applications in Urban and Community studies, Transportation Geography, Asian Geography, and Geographies of Race and Ethnicity.



Wan Yu is a third-year Assistant Professor at Binghamton University Geography Department. Her research is in the field of contemporary immigration, urban ethnic settlements with a specific focus on highly skilled migrants in the United States. She has published in the fields of geography and migration studies. She has a regular teaching load of 2-2, along with the responsibility of advising master students. She is also the undergraduate co-director of the department. In this early career workshop, she plans to learn from mentors on how to make the best use of my second term to obtain tenure. What should she particularly need to improve in the second term? And how to balance research, teaching, and service?

Mentor Biographies



Derek Alderman is Professor of Geography at University of Tennessee and Past President of the American Association of Geographers. As a cultural/historical geographer, his scholarly interests include public memory, race, social justice, heritage tourism, and critical place name study—with an emphasis on the African American experience in the southeastern United States. He is a long-time advocate and beneficiary of professional mentoring. In the summers of 2016 and 2017, Derek co-directed the GFDA Early Career Workshops along with hosting the AAG Department Leadership workshops. From 2012 to 2017, he served as Head of the Department of Geography at the University of Tennessee. As Head, Derek oversaw seven successful tenure and/or promotion cases and led that unit through strategic planning, curriculum and program restructuring, and the creation of initiatives devoted to diversity and mentoring. In 2017, he received the Distinguished Mentor Award from the National Council for Geographic Education and the Distinguished Career Award from the Ethnic Geography Specialty Group of the AAG. As President of the AAG, from 2016 to 2017, Derek developed the “Geography is REAL (Responsive, Engaged, Advocating, and Life-Improving)” initiative, which encourages greater attention to public intellectualism, communication savviness, and disciplinary promotion and well-being.



Sarah A. Blue is an associate professor of geography at Texas State University. Her research broadly focuses on how international migration and changes in the global political economy affect local socio-economic dynamics in the Latin America and the United States. Her current areas of research focus on gender, race, and transnationalism, specifically undocumented Latino migration to the United States and socio-economic change in Cuba. She took over the directorship of the Race, Ethnicity, and Place (REP) Conference in 2016 and is Co-Coordinator of the IX REP Conference with Rebecca Torres.



Scott Wm. Bowman, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the School of Criminal Justice at Texas State University and the Special Assistant to the Provost for Inclusion and Diversity. Dr. Bowman earned his Ph.D. in Justice Studies from Arizona State University with an emphasis on racial and socioeconomic inequalities. His current teaching and research interests include race and crime, socioeconomic status and crime, hip-hop and positive youth development, and juvenile justice. His recent research appears as various academic journals and books on a variety of criminological and sociological topics, including a two volume, edited book on race and prisons entitled “Color Behind Bars: Racism in the U.S. Prison System.”



Joe T. Darden received his Ph.D. in 1972 from the University of Pittsburgh. He is Professor of Geography and former Dean of Urban Affairs Programs, 1984-1997. He received the Distinguished Faculty Award in 1984. He is a former Fulbright Scholar, Department of Geography, University of Toronto, 1997-1998. Dr. Darden’s research interests are urban social geography, residential segregation, immigration, and socioeconomic neighborhood inequality in multi-racial societies. He is the author or co-author of 9 books and numerous scholarly articles on race and residential segregation, especially in Metropolitan Detroit. Among his previous books are: Detroit: Race and Uneven Development (co-authored with Richard Hill, June Thomas, and Richard Thomas), Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987; and Detroit: Race Riots, Racial Conflicts, and Efforts to Bridge the Racial Divide (co-authored with Richard Thomas), East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013.



Caroline Faria is a feminist political geographer. She draws on feminist intersectional approaches to examine the geopolitical intimacies of violence, with a particular interest in the racialized, gendered, sexual and classed politics of nationalism and neoliberal globalization in South Sudan and Uganda. Her current NSF funded research project examines the political-economies of the beauty industry in the Gulf-East African region.

Mentor Biographies



Melissa R. Gilbert is Director of the Center for Sustainable Communities, and Professor and Chair of the Department of Geography and Urban Studies at Temple University. Her research interests are in the areas of feminist and critical race theory, economic and welfare state restructuring, and the intersection of urban inequalities and lack of access to information and communication technologies. Her research has been supported by the Fulbright Commission, the National Science Foundation, and the Social Science Research Council. Her research has been published in journals such as the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, the *Professional Geographer*, *Urban Geography*, *Geoforum*, *Transactions in GIS*, and *Information, Communication & Society*. With Dr. Michele Masucci, she published *ICT Geographies: Strategies for Bridging the Digital Divide*, (2011, Praxis (e) Press). She has worked with community organizations related to economic empowerment and digital inequalities, is a former member of the Montgomery County Planning Commission Board in Pennsylvania, and the President of the Lower Merion School Board.



Audrey Kobayashi is an activist scholar whose work includes topics on racism, gender, migration, human rights, disability, homelessness, and poverty. She is past president of the AAG and a Fellow of the AAG. Her recent publications include the co-authored *The Equity Myth: Racism and Indigeneity in Canadian Universities*, and co-edited *International Encyclopedia of Geography*, as well as articles in many geography journals. She is currently working on homelessness activism in Dublin and on housing in Vancouver's Downtown East Side.



Wei Li received her BS and MS degrees in China and PhD at the USC(CA). She is Professor at the Asian Pacific American Studies/School of Social Transformation, School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning in ASU. Her foci of research are migration, integration and transnational connections. She is the author or [co-]editor of six scholarly books and two journal theme issues, and has 138 other publications. Funding sources of her work include NSF (four grants) and Canadian government (three grants). She served at the inaugural class of the National Asia Research Associates with the National Bureau of Asian Research and Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Fulbright Senior Scholar to Canada (2006-2007) and India (2016-2017), and recipient of Rockefeller Foundations' Bellagio Writing Fellowship (2014). She was a member (2003-2012), Vice Chair (2004-2010), and Chair (2010-2012) of the U.S. Census Bureau's Race and Ethnic Advisory Committees on the Asian Population; a member of the International Steering Committee for the International Metropolis Project since 2008; and the North American Director for the International Society of Studying Chinese Overseas (2010-2019).



Minelle Mahtani is an Associate Professor in the Institute for Social Justice and Senior Advisor to the Provost on Racialized Faculty at The University of British Columbia. Dr. Mahtani is a former radio host, for "Sense of Place," on Roundhouse Radio, 98.3 Vancouver (shows are posted at minellemahtani.com) and a former journalist with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.



Dr. Aimee Roundtree's research researches communication in STEM fields, including science, technology, engineering, and medicine, using qualitative, survey, text mining, and user research methods, as well as mixed methods approaches. In particular, her work interrogates points of translation and transaction between experts, policymakers, and the public, as well as human and non-human agents. . She is the Associate Editor of Book Reviews for *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*; the Social Media Officer for the Association of Research, Science, Technology and Medicine; a Review Board Member for the Writing Across the Curriculum Clearinghouse; and the President of the American Communication Association.

Mentor Biographies



Rickie Sanders is Professor of Geography/Urban Studies. During her tenure at Temple she served as both Graduate Chair and Chair of her Department, Director of Women's Studies, and was named a Fellow at the Center for the Humanities. She has published in *Women's Studies Quarterly*, *Revista Artemis XVI*, *Journal of Geography*, *Professional Geographer*, *Gender Place and Culture*, *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, *Antipode*, and *Urban Geography*. Her current interests are photography, urban geography, geography and gender, and teaching. In addition to her publications, she has served on numerous committees for the Association of American Geographers (AAG), National Council of Geographic Education, and the American Geographical Society, among others. She has also been recognized by numerous organizations for her teaching. Her awards include the Gilbert Grosvenor Award for Outstanding Teaching, the Eleanor Hofkin Award for Outstanding Teaching from the College of Liberal Arts/Temple University; and the Distinguished Teaching Award from the National Council for Geographic Education. The Finding A Way Project under her directorship received the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund Award Special Commendation from the American Association of University Women. The Association of American Geographers recently honored her for her success in Enhancing Diversity in the discipline.



Emily Skop is Professor and Chair in the Department of Geography and Environment Studies and Founding Director of the Global Intercultural Research Center at UCCS. Through the lens of urban, ethnic, and social geographies, Professor Skop's scholarship explores global migration and its consequences. Her work confronts persistent notions about how identity and inequality are constructed across places, and also examines the multiple ways in which scale is utilized as a concept to create legacies of advantage and disadvantage. Professor Skop has built a significant research record, including a book titled *The Immigration and Settlement of Asian Indians*, and nearly fifty peer-reviewed book chapters and research articles. In addition, she maintains ongoing academic and service interests in the discipline of geography. As evidence of her continued contributions, Professor Skop was recently awarded the 2018 Distinguished Scholar Award in Ethnic Geography from the American Association of Geographers, as well as the 2017 UCCS Faculty Award for Outstanding Contribution to Diversity and Inclusiveness.



Nikoleta Theodoropoulou is an Associate Professor of Physics at Texas State University and the director of the Physics graduate program. She received her B.S. in Physics from the University of Athens in Greece and her Ph.D. in Experimental Condensed Matter Physics from the University of Florida. Prior to joining Texas State in 2008, Dr. Theodoropoulou worked as a postdoctoral associate at MIT and Michigan State University focusing on the spin properties of oxides and semiconductors. Her current research examines the electronic properties of epitaxial interfaces between dissimilar materials such as Silicon and multifunctional oxides. Dr. Theodoropoulou has received an NSF-Career award and she has published over 50 research articles. In 2017, she initiated a monthly workshop series on Diversity and Inclusion for Texas State Physics graduate students and faculty on topics such as LGBTQIA, Race, Abilities and Disabilities, Intercultural communication and for Unconscious bias in STEM fields.



Rebecca Maria Torres is associate professor in the Department of Geography & the Environment and associate of the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LLILAS) at the University of Texas at Austin. Her areas of interest include (im)migration, Children/Youth Geographies, Gender, Feminist Geography, and Activist/Engaged Scholarship. Her current research focuses on Mexican and Central American unaccompanied child refugees/migrants. She has been involved in a number of AAG and NSF supported initiatives to increase diversity in geography and higher education. These include: "Departments and Underrepresented Students ALIGNED: Addressing Locally-tailored Information Infrastructure & Geosciences Needs for Enhancing Diversity"; "Catalyzing Research on Geographies of Broadening Participation"; "Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) on Immigration, Geography, and Race/Ethnicity in the United States"; and an S-STEM program to support undergraduates in environmental sciences. She is Co-Organizer of the 2018 IX Race, Ethnicity, and Place (REP) Conference and Early Career Workshop with Sarah Blue in Austin, Texas.