

# SOCIOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY NEWSLETTER

Fall 2023 Edition



# A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR



Welcome to our 2023/2024 Sociology and Anthropology newsletter! Since our last newsletter, the Department, our faculty, students, and staff have been busy! We have welcomed four new department members. Two new faculty have joined us: Dr. Lilian Chavez is our new Senior Lecturer in Sociology and Internship Coordinator, and Dr. Robyn Dodge is Visiting Assistant Professor in Archeology for 2023/2024. We also have two new staff members: a new undergraduate academic advisor, Ms. Lauren Vanpool, and a new Administrative Assistant, Ms. Danielle Naylor. We are delighted to have these new members! Check out their profiles inside. Also check out the achievements and activities of our students and alumni on the following pages. To celebrate their achievements, we returned to an in-person Departmental Student Awards Ceremony, holding it in the beautiful new Trinity Hall on campus. Ms. Meghan Lowrey (UTA B.A. Anthropology), our guest speaker, encouraged our current students to consider how well their degrees are preparing them for their futures and she gave students advice about direct applications. That message fit well into a year in which we launched our B.S. in Applied Sociology! In April, we also had an amazing talk about direct

application of our degrees with our Termini Distinguished Lecture. Dr. Elizabeth Briody, founder of consultancy organization, Cultural Keys, who worked for decades as an Anthropologist for General Motors, shared her philosophy, ideas, and specific examples of alternative work paths for those with social science or humanities degrees. It was a great department event! Another fun department event was our first annual Department Halloween Costume Contest. Check out the winners on page 25 and get ready for this year's contest! All day trick-or-treating in the department on 10/31 and a live costume contest at 4pm in UH 418. It's going to be a lot of fun. Hope you can join us! You are always welcome to swing by UH 430 (no costume required), to share your news with us, and to follow us on our social media. We love to hear from our current students and our alumni! Best wishes for a great 2023/2024 academic year!

Warmly,

*Heather Jacobson, Ph.D.*  
Chair, Department of Sociology & Anthropology

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Dr. Jacobson, student Gabriela Reynoso, and Dr. Zlolski at the student awards ceremony



Dr. Kunovich posing with student Ishani Sathianathan



Dr. Khanduri posing with student Sydney Lowenthal



Guests listening to the awards ceremony presentation

## STUDENT AWARDS CEREMONY

The 2022-2023 Student Award Ceremony was held May 4 in Trinity Hall. We were delighted to recognize and celebrate our students' academic achievements. This was our first in-person award ceremony since the pandemic and we had a great turnout. As we reflect on this successful event, we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to celebrate your achievements once again next year!

## GRADUATING SOCIOLOGY SENIORS

Blanca Antolin	Hailey Hanson	Desere Shirinian	Mikayla Beatey
Katherine Parada	C. Kay Stanford	Mayeli Contreras	Anita Ramos
Sunedus Subuh	Diante Duffie	Joanna Ruiz	Taylor White
Melody Foreman			

## GRADUATING SOCIOLOGY MASTERS STUDENTS

Brittany Baucom    Lauren Vanpool

## GRADUATING ANTHROPOLOGY SENIORS

Brooke Anderson	Anjali Himali	Madison Sala	Miranda Cox
Sergio Hernandez	Keelie Waikel	Dominique Fleming	Tyler Mitchell
Alanna White	Ashlei Jones	Joshua Morrison	Declan Williams

## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS ACCOLADES SCHOLARS: SOCIOLOGY

Brittany Baucom	Elizabeth Ferrucci	Kadynh Lane	Anthony Emerick
Red Jones	Amber Ottun		

## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS ACCOLADES SCHOLARS: ANTHROPOLOGY

Alejandra Bolivar	Anjali Himali	Melanie Jones	Ewan Edwards
Robert Prichard	Daniela Martinez Herrera		

## SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

Anthony Emerick    Andrea Jenkins    Alicia Leon Luna

## SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT

Ami Suzuki



## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT RESEARCH FORUM POSTER AWARD WINNER

Daniela Martinez Herrera

### SOCIOLOGY HONOR ROLL\*

Rugayh Alrawaziq	Angela Lee	Nylah Ross	Ajah Anderson
Marlene Mejia	Erika Soltero	Johan Flores	Celeste Mora

### ANTHROPOLOGY HONOR ROLL\*

Abigail Ackers	Elli Ferren	Shelby Quinn	Daniel Bright
Jessica Moring	Corrina Cobb-Hayes		

### SOCIOLOGY SCHOLARS\*\*

Destiny Aladeyelu	Amber Ottun	Ishani Sathianathan	Luis Vera
Elizabeth Ferrucci	Kusum Regmi	C. Kay Stanford	Red Jones
Gabriela Reynoso	Kadyh Lane	Jocelyn Rodriguez	

### ANTHROPOLOGY SCHOLARS\*\*

Alejandra Bolivar	Melanie Jones	Ashley Stephens	Kadence Brown
Andrea Johnson	Andrea Johnson	Debbie Vickery	Ewan Edwards
Robert Prichard	Declan Williams	Michelle Hoskins	

### THE BEN & TRUDY TERMINI ANTHROPOLOGY FELLOWSHIP

Declan Williams Daniela Martinez Herrera

*\* Honor roll recipients have maintained a GPA of 3.5 or higher within the major and 3.0 or higher overall.*

*\*\* Scholars have maintained a GPA of 3.5 or higher within the major, 3.0 or higher overall, and have completed more than 12 hours of coursework in the major.*



Left to Right: Mr. Blaine T. Williams; Scholarship awardee Gabriela Reynoso; Mrs. Elaine Davenport; Dr. Heather Jacobson

## THE BLAINE T. AND JEAN W. WILLIAMS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN SOCIOLOGY

Sonya Parker Gabriela Reynoso

### LAMBDA ALPHA INDUCTEES

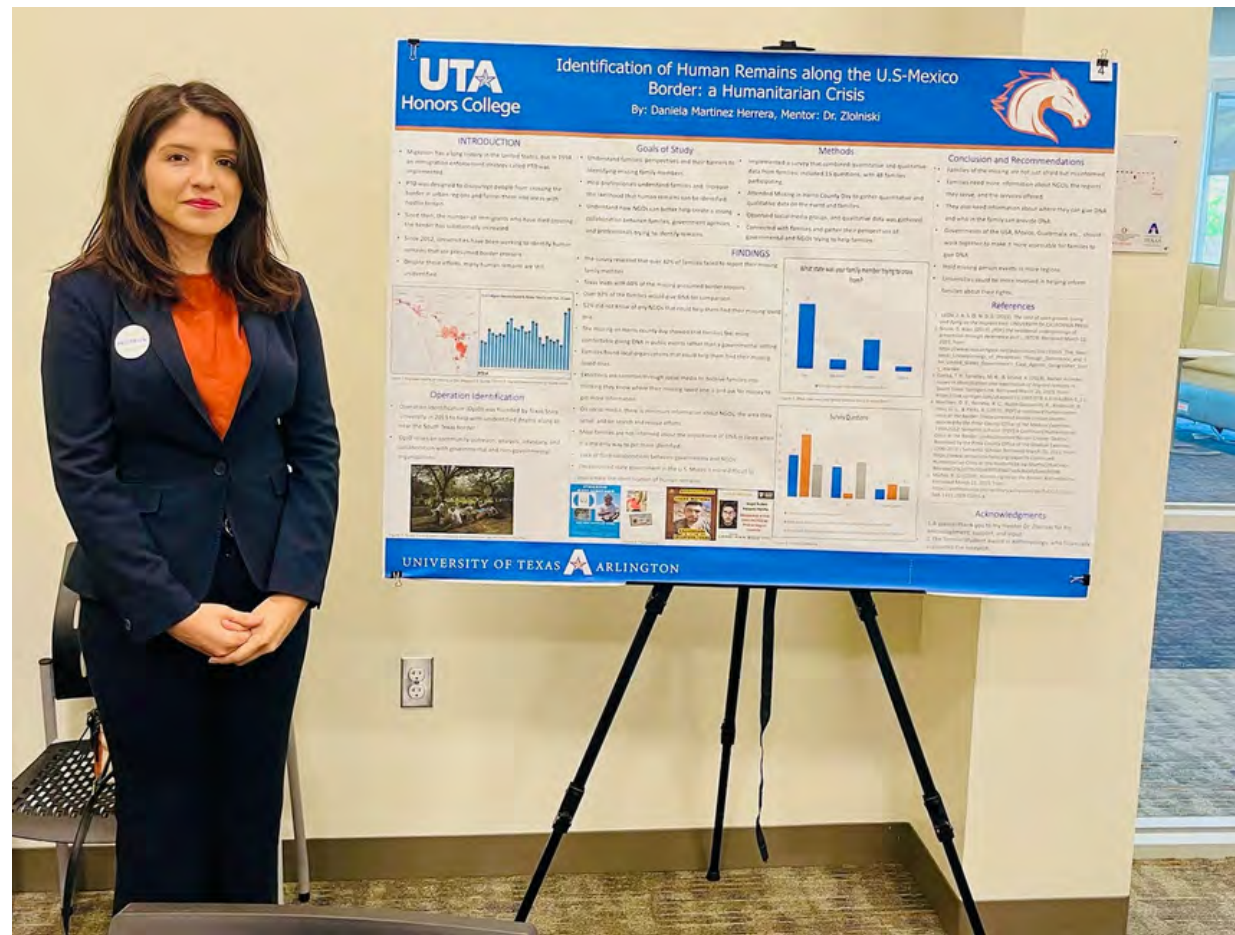
Citlali Concha Sydney Lowenthal

### ALPHA KAPPA DELTA INDUCTEES

Elizabeth Ferrucci Ishani Sathianathan C. Kay Stanford  
Red Jones



# SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT RESEARCH



Anthropology undergraduate student Daniela Martinez-Herrera posing next to her research poster

Migration within the U.S.-Mexico border region has a long history. Yet the implementation of an immigration enforcement strategy since 1994 known as Prevention Through Deterrence (PTD) has led to a surge of deaths along the border. Anthropology undergraduate student Daniela Martinez-Herrera has researched this topic and presented her findings at the Honors Research Symposium in August. She also presented at last semester's College of Liberal Arts Spotlight on Student Research Forum and won first place in the poster category.

Daniela's research shows that Universities have taken action since 2012 to help identifying human remains found near the border, aiming to bring closure to grieving families. Operation Identification (OpID), founded by Texas State University in 2013, strives to address this crisis by employing community outreach, analysis, and collaboration with various organizations to aid in identifying unidentified remains.

She also explored families' perspectives on identifying missing loved ones. Her survey revealed that over 42% of families fail to report their missing members, while Texas leads with 60% of missing presumed border crossers. She also showed that families are more comfortable providing DNA at public events, highlighting the need for improved communication between families, governments, and NGOs.

Daniela's work highlights the importance of addressing the challenges faced by families of missing individuals, advocating for better communication and collaboration, and ensuring a more empathetic approach to a pressing humanitarian issue. She also advocates for universities to be more involved in helping families to connect with government agencies to identify the remains of their missing members.

**INTRODUCTION**

- Migration has a long history in the United States, but in 1994 an immigration enforcement strategy called PTD was implemented.
- PTD was designed to discourage people from crossing the border in urban regions and funnel them into areas with hostile terrain.
- Since then, the number of immigrants who have died crossing the border has substantially increased.
- Since 2012, Universities have been working to identify human remains that are presumed border crossers.
- Despite these efforts, many human remains are still unidentified.

**Goals of Study**

- Understand families' perspectives and their barriers to identifying missing family members.
- Help professionals understand families and, increase the likelihood that human remains can be identified
- Understand how NGOs can better help create a strong collaboration between families, government agencies, and professionals trying to identify remains.

**Methods**

- Implemented a survey that combined quantitative and qualitative data from families; included 15 questions, with 48 families participating.
- Attended Missing in Harris County Day to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the event and families.
- Observed social media groups, and qualitative data was gathered.
- Connected with families and gather their perspectives of governmental and NGOs trying to help families.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

- Families of the missing are not just afraid but misinformed.
- Families need more information about NGOs, the regions they serve, and the services offered.
- They also need information about where they can give DNA and who in the family can provide DNA.
- Governments of the USA, Mexico, Guatemala, etc., should work together to make it more accessible for families to give DNA.
- Hold missing person events in more regions.
- Universities could be more involved in helping inform families about their rights.

**Findings**

- The survey revealed that over 42% of families failed to report their missing family member.
- Texas leads with 60% of the missing presumed border crossers.
- Over 92% of the families would give DNA for comparison
- 52% did not know of any NGOs that could help them find their missing loved one
- The missing on Harris county day showed that families feel more comfortable giving DNA in public events rather than a governmental setting.
- Families found local organizations that could help them find their missing loved ones.
- Extortions are common through social media to deceive families into thinking they know where their missing loved one is and ask for money to get more information.
- On social media, there is minimum information about NGOs, the area they serve, and on search and rescue efforts.
- Most families are not informed about the importance of DNA in cases when it is the only way to get them identified.
- Lack of fluid collaborations between governments and NGOs.
- Decentralized state government in the U.S. Makes it more difficult to coordinate the identification of human remains.

**Operation Identification**

- Operation Identification (OpID) was founded by Texas State University in 2013 to help with unidentified deaths along or near the South Texas border.
- OpID relies on community outreach, analysis, advocacy, and collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organizations.

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**Acknowledgments**

- A special thank you to my mentor Dr. Zlinski for his encouragement, support, and input.
- The Termini Student Award in Anthropology, who financially supported the research.



# ANTHROPOLOGY CLUB

## DIGGING INTO A GREAT YEAR

The Anthropology Club is a student organization dedicated to studying and preserving human culture. The Club's primary focus is on engaging students in the field of anthropology through both academic and social means. The Anthropology Club offers opportunities to learn more about global cultures and issues, explore different traditions and beliefs in field trips and workshops, and create community with other anthropology students. Get involved with the Anthropology Club and discover the wonders of humanity and the world around us!

To learn more about Anthropology club, email [sxl3876@mavs.uta.edu](mailto:sxl3876@mavs.uta.edu)

### OFFICERS:

**President:** Sydney Lowenthal

**Vice President:** Cameron Ditore

**Treasurer:** Robert Prichard

**Creative Director:** Alejandra Bolivar

**Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Ritu Khanduri



Top and left: Anthropology club officers with guest speaker Dr. Elizabeth Briody, Middle right: Anthropology club officers 2022-2023, Bottom right: Anthropology students participating in outdoor activities with Dr. Ashley Lemke



# SOCIOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION



Pictured: 2023 Sociology Student Association officers



## EXPLORING THE SOCIAL WORLD

The Sociology Student Association (SSA) is a vibrant and engaging student organization dedicated to promoting a deeper understanding of sociological concepts, fostering academic growth, and creating a sense of community among sociology enthusiasts. Comprising of passionate students from various academic backgrounds - not just Sociology - SSA provides a platform for individuals interested in the study of society, human behavior, and the complex dynamics that shape our world.

SSA's events serve as opportunities for members to connect, learn, and contribute to both the university community and the broader society. SSA hosts guest lectures featuring prominent faculty, providing students with insights into cutting-edge research and real-world applications of sociological theories.

In addition to academic enrichment, SSA is known for its community outreach initiatives. SSA organizes volunteer activities and awareness campaigns to address pressing social issues. Whether it's participating in food drives, conducting workshops on social justice, or organizing fundraisers for charitable causes, SSA members actively engage with the community to make a positive impact.

To get involved with SSA, email [mavs.ssa@gmail.com](mailto:mavs.ssa@gmail.com)



## OFFICERS:

**President:** Bertha Ntoti

**Vice President:** Mariah Richardson

**Treasurer:** Kateleen de Vera

**Secretary:** Erika Soltero

**Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Alma Nidia Garza



# FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES

### DAVID ARDITI

In the 2022-23 academic year, Dr. David Ardit published his sixth book, Digital Feudalism: Creators, Credit, Consumption, and Capitalism. This book explores the current moment of capitalism in which we were currently trapped. From Squid Games to the metaverse, Digital Feudalism explores parallels between our current moment and feudalism. Dr. Ardit also grew the Ben Agger Theory Library by adding over 1000 books and building a new space to grow community.



### KELLY BERGSTRAND

Dr. Kelly Bergstrand is teaching social movements and environmental sociology this semester. She continues her research into why or why not people are willing to take action for social and environmental causes and is working on a project with UTA graduate students looking at attitudes toward the apocalypse, fate and climate change. She was also a coauthor on an article published this spring about the use of artificial intelligence in medicine. This year, Dr. Bergstrand spent time with her family traveling, playing soccer, and hiking.

### NAOMI CLEGHORN

Dr. Naomi Cleghorn studies the impact of sea level change on early foraging societies of the southern coast of South Africa. Over the past 7 years, more than 50 researchers and students from UTA and around the world, as well as a professional excavation team based in South Africa, have contributed to the project. Dr. Cleghorn traveled to South Africa this summer to continue her research. She has enjoyed being able to once again teach her Osteology and Zooarchaeology students in the Anthropology lab.



### ALMA GARZA

Dr. Alma Nidia Garza's research on first-generation college students and school engagement during the Covid-19 pandemic has kept her busy. This last year, Dr. Garza worked on her first book manuscript, which examines how school selectivity shapes the upwardly mobile experiences of first-generation college students. She also furthered research on collaborative group projects assessing how parents utilized resources to foster their children's engagement during remote schooling. This summer Dr. Garza presented one of her papers on intersectional inequalities in college classrooms at the American Sociological Association annual conference in Philadelphia. Her travels also took her to south Texas, where she visited family, and Scottsdale, AZ, where she reveled in the outdoors.

### HEATHER JACOBSON

Dr. Heather Jacobson is a family sociologist and reproductive scholar. She teaches courses on family, reproduction, and qualitative research methods. Her current research projects focus on embryo creation/disposition, the assisted reproduction industry, and surrogacy in the contemporary United States. When not working, she enjoys reading for pleasure and exploring the vibrant North Texas arts and food scenes with her family.



# FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES



## M. FAYE HANSON-EVANS

M. Faye Hanson-Evans is an adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology & Anthropology where she teaches courses on social inequality, gender, social problems, popular culture, and more. Faye earned her MA and BA in Sociology from UTA and is both a McNair Scholar and Honors College alum. Her specializations include the sociology of poverty, political sociology, and quantitative data analysis. In 2017, Faye was named UTA's College of Liberal Arts Outstanding Teacher in Distance Education. Most recently, Faye was named an I.D.E.A.S Faculty Fellow for her outstanding course development and teaching practices - both online and in the classroom. She was also recently selected and will be serving as a MAFE (Maverick Advantage Faculty Engagement) Faculty Fellow for the 2023-2024 year.

## DOROTHY KALANZI

Dr. Dorothy Kalanzi is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology. Some of the courses taught by Dr. Kalanzi include Introduction to Sociology, Medical Sociology, Social Inequality, Statistics and Research Methods. Her research interests are in the areas of HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases in Africa



## RITU KHANDURI

Dr. Khanduri is a cultural (Visual) anthropologist and historian. This summer she has been busy with her exhibition, "Enver Ahmed (1909-1992): The cartoonist who belonged to all," which opened in two major cities in India: Bengaluru and New Delhi. She also utilized the summer to prepare for her Faculty Teaching in the Archives Grant at UTA Libraries and to assume leadership of the Lambda Alpha National Anthropology Honor Society through which she looks forward to serving Anthropology students nationally, internationally and at UTA.



## ROBERT KUNOVICH

Dr. Bob Kunovich teaches courses in statistics, research methods, and risk. He is currently working on several different research projects. One examines whether work is associated with the public understanding of science - that is, if people working in occupations requiring greater complexity have more interest in, knowledge of, and trust in the scientific community. A second - at a much earlier stage - examines how people blend beliefs about science and religion. Dr. Kunovich enjoys playing the guitar, swimming, gardening, camping, kayaking, and fishing. He enjoyed trips to the Boundary Waters Canoe area in Northern Minnesota and Colorado in summer 2023.





# FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES

## BETH ANNE SHELTON

Dr. Beth Anne Shelton teaches courses on family, work and gender. She recently started teaching the Work, Occupations and Career Development courses to both help students learn about the nature of work in the US but also how to prepare to enter the job market upon graduation. This course is required for the BS in Applied Sociology but open to other students. She continues her research on civic engagement and the forces that propel women and men to seek elected office. She enjoys running, biking and playing tennis in her free time.



## SHELLEY SMITH

This past spring, Dr. Smith published the article “How and why we should move beyond natural selection in museums to tackle teleology” in the journal *Evolution: Education and Outreach*. This summer, she traveled to Philadelphia to see the exhibit *Skin: Living Armor, Evolving identity* at the Academy of Natural Sciences. This exhibit, originally developed for the California Academy of Sciences by biological anthropologist Nina Jablonski, is an excellent example of employing the interdisciplinary nature of anthropology to convey critical concepts to the public. The exhibit explores the biology of skin, the ways in which humans have assigned meaning to different skin colors (i.e., concepts of race), and the social consequences of our collective choices. In addition to visiting this exhibit, Professor Smith went to the Penn Museum – excellent, for all you classical archaeology fans! – and to the Mütter Museum, an unusual anatomy museum that was far busier than she expected (demonstrating that old exhibits can draw a crowd if they are sufficiently ghoulish or medically interesting).



## AMY SPEIER

In the beginning of the summer, Dr. Amy Speier successfully obtained a book contract from Lexington Books for her second ethnographic monograph. This work, tentatively titled “*Mobility in North American Surrogacy: A Fertile Industry*,” examines cross-border reproductive care and varying types of mobility (of medical providers, egg donor and surrogacy agencies, surrogates, intended parents, and the offspring born via international surrogacy) in North America. She aims to complete her manuscript by December 2023.

## CHRISTIAN ZLOLNISKI

Dr. Christian Zlalniski is a social anthropologist who studies issues of labor, migration, and economic globalization, with special emphasis on the Mexico-US border. Currently he is working on two research projects. One focuses on the extraction and commercialization of beach rocks from Mexico’s Baja California in U.S. markets, and its impact on local communities in Mexico. A second project examines the employment of temporary Mexican workers in the DFW under the H-2B visa category, as Texas is the largest employer of this type of workers in the country. Dr. Zlalniski teaches courses in migration, applied anthropology, and Latino studies. In fall 2022, he was selected as a member of UTA Academy of Distinguished Service Leaders (ADSL).





# TERMINI LECTURE SERIES

## Trailblazing: Anthropology in the World

This year's distinguished Anthropology lecturer was Dr. Elizabeth Briody, founder and principal of Cultural Keys, LLC. Briody's presentation focused on the real-world applications of a degree in Anthropology.



Left: Dr. Briody during her presentation; Right: Action shots of Dr. Briody during her employment with GM

**A**nthropologist Dr. Elizabeth Briody is the founder of Cultural Keys, a consultancy that helps organizations transform their culture and improve their effectiveness. She has had a longstanding interest in organizational culture and change, both in the U.S. and globally. Her projects have spanned many industries including automotive, health care, research institutions, aerospace, insurance, consumer products, and petrochemicals. She currently partners with the firm Relations Research on projects in the private sector. Briody also served as a Co-Principal Investigator on a five-year NSF RED grant to “Revolutionize Engineering Education.” Prior to establishing her consultancy, she had an illustrious 24-year career as an anthropologist at General Motors Research.

In 2020, Briody was honored by the Society for Applied Anthropology’s Bronislaw Malinowski award for lifetime achievement. She is past President of the National Association for the Practice of Anthropology and completed a three-year term as Secretary of the American Anthropological Association in 2021. She now leads the Anthropology Career Readiness Network which brings together more than 20 anthropology associations and 400 volunteers to improve student career preparation.

Her recent books include *The Cultural Dimension of Global Business*, now in its 9th ed., *Cultural Change from a Business Anthropology Perspective* and *Transforming Culture* which was awarded the Robert B. Textor award for Excellence in Anticipatory Anthropology from the American Anthropological Association.

Briody holds an M.A. and a Ph.D. in Anthropology from The University of Texas at Austin, a B.A., magna cum laude from Wheaton College (Norton, MA), and a French Baccaauréat, mention bien.



# DISCOVERING EXCELLENCE

## WITH OUR NEWEST FACULTY MEMBER

### DR. ROBYN DODGE, ANTHROPOLOGIST



**As a seasoned Anthropologist, could you share an example of a memorable research or fieldwork experience that has shaped your perspective on the field?**

Archaeology has challenged me in many ways including to be adaptable and expect the unexpected! I was the first researcher to identify, survey, map, and name my research site, Hun Tun, which has provided exhilarating challenges. One memorable experience that comes to mind as having shaped my perspectives on the field, was during the 2010 field season while excavating a significant building at Hun Tun. Just as I thought I had the construction chronology completed I encountered another feature. This dismantled my previous interpretation of the space. My goal was to tidy up the construction chronology of the northern exterior walls associated with Structure A-1 at Hun Tun. However, the ancient Maya had constructed a chultun at the base of the building and sealed it under a plaster floor with a capstone. A chultun is an underground storage chamber carved into bedrock. I was not at all expecting a chultun. It ended up being one of the most exciting discoveries at Hun Tun to this day. I always remember with great fondness the moment when the capstone was removed, and I went inside for the first time. It was truly an honor to enter the sacred space after 1500 years in pursuit of knowledge.

**For students who may be new to Anthropology, what aspects of the field do you find most intriguing and accessible for them to explore?**

Fieldwork is the best way to experience anthropology and especially archaeology because it provides an opportunity to engage in original research. Fieldwork is original research by design. Fieldwork is also essential to gain “hands on” experience in the discipline. It also allows students to discover whether they enjoy fieldwork as it is a critical component of archaeological research. Should students pursue any anthropology subdiscipline as a career, fieldwork is essential and critical for data collection.

**In addition to your academic pursuits, do you have any personal hobbies or interests that you enjoy outside of the classroom?**

I am an avid and passionate runner! I have completed over 42 full marathons, and additionally completed numerous shorter races as well. Running is a wonderful outlet for me to challenge myself athletically while relieving stress. My running passion has taken me all over the world to compete in races. My most significant running accomplishments include having raced the Boston Marathon 11 years in a row as a time qualifier and induction into the prestigious “Unicorn Club,” with plans to race my 12th consecutive Boston Marathon in April. I also have served as an official pacer for the Austin Marathon nine years in a row, plus currently serve as captain of the team. It is incredibly important for me to have athletic goals because the skills and challenges developed through running are transferrable to my professional and personal life as well. When not running or pursuing archaeology, I am baking bread, reading, and spending time with my husband (Sergio) and dog (Turtle).



# BEHIND THE DESK:

## GET TO KNOW OUR NEW ADMIN WIZARD

### DANIELLE NAYLOR, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

**Why did you choose to pursue a career in higher education, and what do you find most rewarding about working at UTA?**

I had a great time getting my MA and after working at a university museum, I thought it would make the most sense to formally enter the administrative side of academia. I find it very rewarding to be the gate opener and liaison for the department. The Capricorn in me really enjoys making things happen, and I get to do that almost every day. Many of the skills I learned from working in museums and galleries for over ten years translate so well to working in higher education like negotiating, event planning, and organizing unique schedules.

**We heard you're a cat enthusiast! Can you tell us a bit about your feline companions and how they bring joy to your life outside of work?**

I am definitely a cat enthusiast now – though I didn't used to be! Right now our house is packed with cats, 4 of our own (one recently adopted), and 2 kittens we're fostering until we can find a home for them together. Even though it seems like a lot; all of our cats, even the new ones, are generally low-maintenance while still providing cuddles and doing silly cat things.

**Do you have any hobbies or interests that you're passionate about?**

I've recently gotten back into tennis! I played all through K-12 and then stopped because I pulled both my hamstrings, then life sort of happened without it, but now I'm back (unless it's over 100 degrees). I'm also still very involved in the arts. I sit on the Board of Directors for Texas Vignette ([www.texasvignette.org](http://www.texasvignette.org)) as the Art Fair Director. I've spent most of my free time since June organizing Vignette Art Fair 2023 and I'm so excited to invite the department to come to the opening on Nov 3.





# NAVIGATING SUCCESS: A CONVERSATION WITH OUR NEW ADVISOR

Mrs. Lauren Vanpool joined the Department of Sociology & Anthropology in the Spring 2023 semester, having served as an Academic Advisor for other departments for six years. Mrs. Vanpool has a BA in Math and received her MA in Sociology in 2022.

## **Can you share some insights into the most common challenges students face when it comes to academic planning?**

College can be extremely overwhelming and not just because of the coursework itself. Many students don't know how to navigate an institution as big as UTA and as a result, they don't know how to advocate for themselves when they need help. I think it's important that students have someone on campus they feel comfortable coming to with any question, big or small. They should have an ally at the university, someone they can count on to be kind and helpful. As an advisor, I try to be that safe space for them. If they are feeling lost or confused, I want them to know they can reach out to me and even if I'm unable to help, I'll get them connected to someone who can. Students don't always know about the many great resources we have on campus (e.g., the CAPS office, tutoring, the writing center), but if they at least know they can come to me, I can help them find what they need.

## **What do you enjoy most about working with students and helping them navigate their academic journeys?**

There is a lot I like about my job, but I think I most enjoy working with new students. They come in with a mixture of excitement and anxiety. They're eager to get started, but they can also be scared because everything is so new to them. I love getting to welcome them to UTA, relieve some of that anxiety, and get them started out on the right foot.

## **Outside of your role as an advisor, do you have any hobbies or interests that you'd like to share with our department's community?**

I crochet nonstop – it's really a problem. I'm also training to run my first 10K in December. And lately, I've been trying to finally learn how to make music with the synthesizer I bought during lockdown. But mostly, when I'm not at work, I'm hanging out with my 10 month-old, Heath, who is a handful but also so much fun.

## LAUREN VANPOOL, ACADEMIC ADVISOR





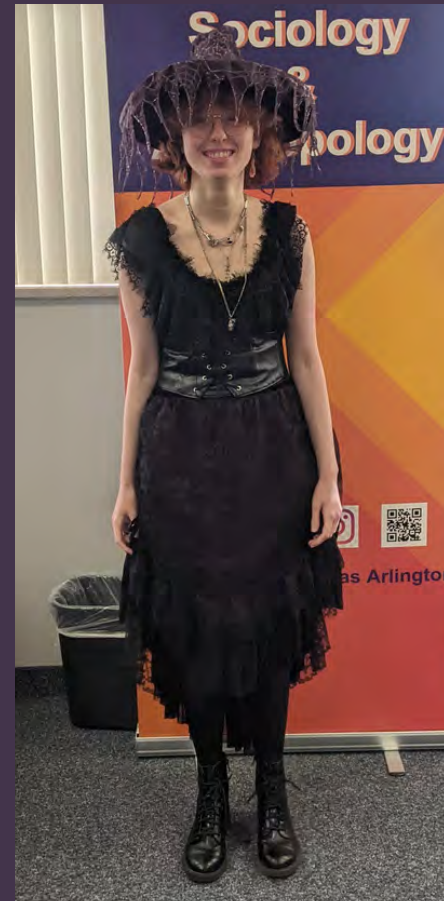
# HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST



Students, faculty and staff had a blast at our inaugural Halloween costume contest last fall! We even had a visit from UTA President Dr. Cowley and UTA Provost Dr. Brown. Thanks to all who participated and we look forward to seeing your costumes this fall!

## BEST STUDENT COSTUMES:

**Andrea "Red" Jones** as witch  
**Miranda Cox** as shark



## BEST FACULTY & STAFF COSTUMES:

**Best Overall:** Mrs. Katrina Nuncio as skeleton  
**Best in Discipline:** Dr. Kelly Bergstrand as ASA Style Guide  
**Best in Discipline Runner Up:** Dr. Jacqueline Fay as 1950's Librarian  
**Best Homages to a Texas Legend:** Dr. Robert Kunovich & Mr. Mark Graves as Willie Nelson  
**Best Group Costume:** President Cowley, Provost Brown, and Vice President Nagy as Among Us characters



Left to right: VP for Faculty Affairs Nagy, Provost Brown, President Cowley



Top left: Red Jones; Middle: Dr. Kelly Bergstrand; Top Right: Dr. Jacqueline Fay; Bottom Left: Mr. Mark Graves & Dr. Robert Kunovich; Bottom Right: Mrs. Katrina Nuncio



# ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

Where can a career in Sociology or Anthropology take you? Each alumni feature is a testament to the boundless possibilities that follow a stellar education.



## ANDREA JENKINS

Andrea Jenkins completed her MA in Sociology in Summer 2023 and is now working at the University of Texas at Arlington as an Academic Advisor in the Department of Kinesiology. Her master's examined the importance mother/daughter relationships on daughters' body image and Intuitive Eating using qualitative interviews. Next, she plans to pursue a Doctorate degree in educational leadership focusing her research on the social and economic barriers of non-traditional students in higher education, particularly working moms.



## ANA MARISCAL

Ana Mariscal received her Sociology MA in 2022 and is now a Research Analyst skilled in mixed-methods research, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and disseminating results. She completed her master's thesis using quantitative statistical analyses to study educational outcomes for Mexican American immigrants in Texas gateway cities. She is also an expert Spanish interviewer and translator.



## SERITA JOHNSON

Since graduating with her BA in Sociology, Serita has worked as an Early Intervention Specialist for Early Childhood Intervention of North Central Texas, providing support to families with developmentally delayed children aged 0-3. While initially considering law school, Serita found a deep passion for assisting children with speech delays. Serita's newfound passion has inspired her to pursue training in speech language pathology at Baylor University.



## HANNAH KELLER

Hannah Keller received her BA in Anthropology from UTA in 2014. Today, Hannah is completing her dissertation in archaeology at Yale with the support of an NSF grant. She is investigating the use of water containers in early human sites.



# CONNECT WITH US

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## FALL EVENTS

**10/11**

### **COLA Fall Festival**

Outside University Hall  
10:30 AM - 1:30 PM

**10/12**

### **Anthropology Alumni Mixer**

Trinity Hall 104 | 5:30 PM - 7 PM

**10/31**

### **Halloween**

Trick or Treating | UH 430 | All Day  
Costume Contest | UH 418 | 4 PM

## SPRING EVENTS

Check our Department Website  
later in the year for details on these  
two Spring events:

Termini Lecture  
Student Awards Ceremony



Department of Sociology and Anthropology

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS