



# Semaphore

The official Newsletter of the Georgia  
Sociological Association

January 2024

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## Letter from the President

To the GSA Community,

Happy New Year! I hope that the end of 2023 brought rest and relaxation and wonderful memories for all that you celebrate. As I reflect on our conference last October, I am sure you will agree that our time together was an outstanding success. Augusta served as a beautiful backdrop to discuss all things sociology, and I believe that our theme of Health and Community was a particular hit! I thoroughly enjoyed speaking with so many of you at the annual meeting, especially our wonderful students – many of whom were attending their first conference.

I would like to take the space to extend several special acknowledgements. Thank you to Dr. Carly Redding for leading us as President during our last year and now rotating into the role of Past-President to continue mentorship of the Executive Board. To Dr. Pamela Pitman Brown, thank you for your final year in the role of Past-President, your years of service to GSA have brought so much light and enjoyment to the organization. And a huge thank you to the other members of last year's board for: organizing the meeting agenda (Dr. Jewrell Rivers), processing registration / all things financial and running the conference registration (Dr. Michallene McDaniel), making sure we continue to follow our by-laws (Dr. Sara Mason), keeping us all informed through the Semaphore and website (Dr. Denise Woodall), keeping a record of all meetings and decisions (Melinda Johnson), and organizing special conference sessions (Dr. Allen Hyde, Dr. Christy Flatt, and Dr. Ellis Logan). Finally, a shoutout to Dr. Linda Treiber for another year of service as Editor of The Journal of Public and Professional Sociology.

The 2023 – 2024 Executive Board is hard at work planning our 2024 conference, which will take place October 9th – 11th in Columbus, GA at the Cunningham Conference Center. As we move closer to the conference, be on the lookout for the conference theme, call for papers and registration, and an announcement for a hotel room block for our meeting.

Cheers to another wonderful year,

Brandon K. Attell, PhD

GSA President

## 2024 Georgia Sociological Association Annual Conference

Mark your calendars for our 2024 conference that will take place  
On October 9th – 11th in Columbus, GA at the Cunningham Conference Center



Columbus, Georgia, played a pivotal role in key political movements, notably in the Civil Rights era, marked by sit-ins at Rich's department store, Freedom Riders' stops, and desegregation efforts in schools, parks, and facilities. The city's textile labor history is marked by significant strikes for better pay and working conditions. Columbus was a focal point for international protests against the School of the Americas, now WHINSEC, linking its training to human rights abuses in Latin America. Environmental activism has centered on concerns over the Chattahoochee River. Movements advocating for affordable housing, healthcare access, and LGBTQ+ issues have influenced the emergence of justice-oriented candidates.

Uptown Columbus and nearby neighborhoods offer diverse food and nightlife options. Uptown is renowned for its vibrant bar scene with establishments featuring craft beers, cocktails, and live music. Explore the scenic Riverwalk along the Chattahoochee for a leisurely stroll, jog, or bike ride, connecting to various parks and attractions.



## 2024 GSA Executive Board

### **President**

Brandon Attell, Georgia State University

Brandon Attell is a senior research associate at the Georgia Health Policy Center. His areas of expertise include quantitative research and evaluation methods, complex statistical programming, and health services research using large administrative databases. Attell works as a member of the Medicaid Policy and Business team and the Blood Disorders team. Additionally, he works across teams to grow the data analytic capacities and practices at the center. Attell's published research has appeared in journals such as Social Science Research, Advances in Medical Sociology, Journal of Death and Dying, Qualitative Health Research, Evaluation & the Health Professions, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, and Illness, Crisis, & Loss.

### **President Elect**

Jewrell Rivers: Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

Jewrell Rivers is a Professor of Sociology, Marriage and Family, and Criminal Justice at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the Tift County Commission of Children and Youth (TCCCY) and the Advisory Board for the Department of Social Work at Albany State University. He is also active on the Planning Committee for the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Conference. Along with his vast teaching duties, Dr. Rivers has also published research manuscripts in the Journal of Ethnographic and Qualitative Research (JEQR), the Journal of Family Social Work (JFSW) and the Law Enforcement Executive Forum (LEEF). Along with his manuscript publications, Dr. Rivers has held professional memberships in the Georgia Sociological Association (GSA), The National Council of Family Relations (NCFR), the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), the Southeastern Council of Family Relations (SECFR) and the Rural Sociological Society (RSS). Statewide responsibilities include teaching sociology for eCore and serving on the Regents Advisory Committee for sociology (RAC). Most importantly, Dr. Rivers models community leadership and social advocacy for his students and strives to provide opportunities for them to engage civic, charitable and non-profit organizations and agencies.

### **Vice President**

Allen Hyde: Georgia Institute of Technology

Allen Hyde Allen is an Assistant Professor in the School of History and Sociology at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He completed his PhD and Master's in sociology at the University of Connecticut, and his BA in history/sociology at the University of Alabama Birmingham. He is a quantitative scholar whose main research areas are stratification and inequality, urban sociology, work and occupations, and immigration. He has published research on the effects of financialization on income inequality in affluent nations, the relationship between immigration and earnings inequality in small towns and major metropolitan areas in the United States, discrimination in job hiring, and the effects of the Great Recession on the college earnings premium. He is currently conducting research on the effects of race/ethnicity and immigration status on homeownership, social and

demographic change in Clarkston, GA (known as the most diverse square mile in America), and flood and heat vulnerability's relationship to social vulnerability in neighborhoods of Savannah, GA.

### **Past President**

Carly Redding: University of North Georgia

Carly Redding joined the faculty at the University of North Georgia (UNG) in 2008. Currently, she resides in the Department of Sociology and Human Services, where she also serves as assessment coordinator for the department. However, she frequently teaches courses in the area of assessment, diagnosis and counseling for the Psychological Science department. Carly presently researches in the area of human trafficking, specifically how maternal warmth and attachment are protective factors associated with human trafficking in high risk, impoverished communities.

### **Recording Officer**

Melinda Johnson: University of North Georgia

### **Financial Officer**

Michallene McDaniel: University of North Georgia

Michallene is a Professor of Sociology & Human Services at the University of North Georgia. She has been an active member of the GSA since 2002, and has served as an At-Large Member, Vice-President and Program Chair (twice!), and as President of the organization. In recent years she has served as a member of the ad hoc Registration Committee. She would like to apply her institutional memory and her ability to work well with committees to the role of Financial Officer, to ensure the economic health, transparency, and long-term stability of the GSA.

### **Members-at-Large**

Hosana Fletcher: Georgia State University's Perimeter College

Hosana Fletcher holds two Master's degrees from Tulane University, one in Public Health and the other in Sociology. She has been teaching Sociology at GSU since 2010, during its GPC era. Commencing as an adjunct instructor, she transitioned to a full-time temporary Instructor in January 2019, and later assumed the role of Lecturer in August 2021. With a background that spans non-profit management, local government, and small corporate business, Hosana has honed her skills in program management and community outreach. Her primary focus centers on community development, encompassing health, economic development, education, and criminal justice. Originally from New Jersey, Hosana did her undergraduate work at UGA and pursued her graduate studies at Tulane University in New Orleans, LA. Married with two wonderful children, aged 19 and 11, Hosana and her family faced the challenges of Hurricane Katrina during their seven years in New Orleans, leading to their relocation to Covington in 2005. Residing on a working cattle and hay farm, they share their space with two barn cats, five chickens, and maintain about an acre dedicated to vegetable production.

Christy Flatt: Gordon State College

Christy Flatt is a Professor of Sociology at Gordon State College. She serves on the Social Action Committee for Women in Society. Formerly she has served the Southern Sociological Association. Her areas of specialty are Marriage and Family, Gender, Work, Social Policy, and Social Inequality. Her research has focused on the Impact of gender, personal resources, and national policy on the work rewards in Post-Industrial Nation, Gender ideologies and marital relationships in Chinese society, and gender in the classroom.

Ellis Loga: Valdosta State University

Ellis Logan completed a Ph.D. with a dual title in Sociology and Demography at Penn State University in 2018. Following this achievement, Ellis served as an Assistant Teaching Professor at Ball State University from the Fall of 2018 to the Spring of 2019. In the subsequent Fall of 2019, Ellis transitioned to the Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice Department at Valdosta State University. Within the academic sphere, Ellis is actively involved in teaching a variety of courses, including Sociological Theory, Statistics, Medical Sociology, Sociology of Food, and Sociology of Sport. Ellis has contributed to notable publications, with works featured in GSA's Journal of Public and Professional Sociology (JPPS), Social Science Research, and Social Science and Medicine.

### **Semaphore Editor**

Denise Woodall: University of North Georgia

Dr. Woodall, a Senior Lecturer at the University of North Georgia since 2013, holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Georgia. Specializing in Crime, Law, Deviance, and Gender, she also earned a Master of Arts degree from the University of Miami in Criminology and Race and Ethnic Relations. As a researcher, Dr. Woodall has explored the lives of people who use drugs through National Institute of Health grants. She served as principal investigator on various projects, examining topics like formerly incarcerated activists, women in the criminal legal system, color-blind racism, whiteness in college classrooms, policing of protests, carceral status identities, and child-reunification experiences of formerly incarcerated mothers. With a notable history of service, she has been active in leadership roles, including the American Society of Criminology's Division of Convict Criminology and working in service to the community of people with addictions since 2003. Her work is published in journals such as *Humanity and Society*, *Sociological Inquiry*, *Social Justice*, *Teaching Sociology*, *Journal of Drug Issues*, and the *Journal of Public and Professional Sociology*.

### **Parliamentarian**

Sara Mason: University of North Georgia

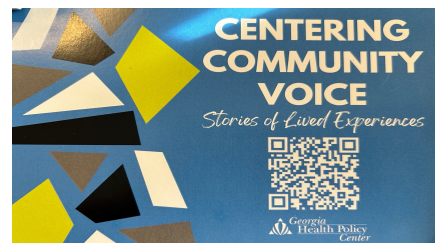
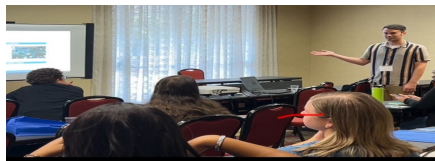
Dr. Mason's research focuses on the intersections of race, culture, knowledge production, and power, with a particular emphasis on cultural practices (particularly tourism, place-making and consumption), in relation to racial identities, class, history, and memory. She is currently working on a book length manuscript based on her research on the growth and popularity of heritage tourism in relation to the politics of place-making and a growing Black tourist class.

## 2023 GSA Conference

### Thanks to the Sponsors of our 2023 Conference

#### **The Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC) donated \$7,500**

Our conference's theme of Health and Community was a perfect fit with GHPC's mission of integrating research, policy, and programs to advance health and well-being. Situated in Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, the center is at work in more than 220 communities in all 50 states to help improve health status by connecting decision makers with evidence-based policy guidance. To celebrate the sponsorship award, we kicked off our 2023 conference with a screening and discussion of GHPC's documentary *Centering Community Voice: Stories of Lived Experience*. The lessons put forth provide a model for us to learn from in thinking beyond the conventional practice of community engagement by centering stakeholders in the research and implementation process. A list of the Georgia Health Policy Center's many accomplishments since their establishment in 1995 can be found here: <https://ghpc.gsu.edu/about-georgia-health-policy-center/accomplishments/>



#### **White Oak Pastures Center for Agricultural Resilience donated \$3,000**

This organization's work of caring for land, livestock, sustainability, and community building was in line with the GSA's 2023 Health and Community theme. White Oak operates as a vertically integrated zero-waste model of radically traditional farming that exists as a living ecosystem with humanely treated animals and holistic land management that serves as a model for investing in and reviving rural communities. More information about White Oak's work can be found here

<https://whiteoakpastures.com/pages/centerforagriculturalresilience>



## 2023 Meritorious Service Award

Dr. Darina Lepadatu is Professor of Sociology and International Conflict Management at Kennesaw State University. Areas of expertise: Intercultural and Organizational Conflict, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Transnational Migration & Refugees, Conflict Management.

Regional area of expertise: Central and Eastern Europe;  
European Union; Post-communist Societies

Lepadatu and her team were awarded a \$200,000 National Science Foundation (NSF) grant that was able to fund their research on lean production in the auto industry across the United States.

Dr Lepadatu is starting a new role as President of the Faculty Senate at [Kennesaw State](#). She hopes to use her background in organizational sociology to further improve communication and collaboration between faculty and the university administration, students and staff.





## 2023 Sociologist of the Year



Linda A. Treiber, PhD, MSN



Linda A. Treiber, PhD, MSN, serves as a Professor of Sociology at Kennesaw State University and previously chaired the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. Additionally, she holds the esteemed role of Editor for the Journal of Public and Professional Sociology and was honored with the GSA's Meritorious Service Award in 2017.

As an educator, Dr. Treiber offers courses in medical sociology and the sociology of work, occupations, and organizations. Her research explores the unintended consequences of rational action and investigates the social sources of premature death, injury, and illness. Applying sociological principles to nursing practice, she brings an interdisciplinary perspective to workplace issues, including medication administration errors, second victims, bullying, and emotional distress.

Acknowledged for her exceptional contributions, Dr. Treiber received the Diversity Faculty Fellow of 2017-18 at KSU and the Outstanding Professional Service Award within her department. Various awards and development funds further underscore her commitment to advancing the field.

An accomplished author, Dr. Treiber has published over 20 articles in peer-reviewed journals, authored two books, and contributed to multiple refereed chapters. Her work has been featured in medical and sociological journals such as the Journal of Nursing Education, Social Science Research, Health Sociology Review, Teaching Sociology, the International Journal for Human Caring, Qualitative Health Research, and others. Dr. Treiber continues to make significant contributions to the academic community.



## 2023 Student Paper Awards

*We are thrilled about our 2023 student paper award recipients!*

### Graduate paper Award

Thomas Hodges: Moral Injury and Military Reintegration: The Role of Identity Dissonance in a Survey of United States Military Veterans

### Undergraduate Awards

1st place: Cooper Rock: Battleground Status, The Relationship Between National Attention and Health

2nd place: Casey Helton Food Deserts as an Indicator of Racial and Class Stratification in the United States

3rd place: Stephanie Galicia: An Examination of the Intersection of Race and the Opioid Crisis in the United States.



Consider encouraging students to submit papers for the upcoming award year. Spread the word! More info to come on where to submit.

## Conference Highlights

### Students!

*At GSA it's all about the students. We want to provide a welcoming, enlightening, productive, and fun environment where students' scholarly synergy soars! Students' showcased their work in the area of Health and Community.*



*Top left: Implications or Consequences? A changing Atmosphere for Physician Assisted Death.*

*Top right: Students networking*

*Bottom Left: Emma Menardi, Seeing the Self: Self-administered HIV testing and Bringing the Clinic Home*

*Bottom Center: Advanced Directive Adoption in the US: The Significance of Cultural Context and Literacy in End-of-Life Planning, UNG, a CAP project from Sociological Practice Course*

*Bottom Right: Sex trafficking: A General Overview presented by Kelley Love at UNG.*

### Inclusive Teaching Workshop!



This workshop will present a wide range of strategies for promoting equity in the college classroom, including designing the course and syllabus with an inclusive mind-set, managing classroom environment and interactions and inclusive practices outside the classroom. Panelists: Pamela Pittman-Brown, Albany State University Michallene McDaniel, University of North Georgia Tiffany Parsons, University of West Georgia Jewrell Rivers, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.



## Passing the Gavel and Luncheon



Top left: Carly Redding passes the gavel to our incoming President Brandon Attell.  
Top Right: Linda Treiber, our Sociologist of the Year gave the keynote address on The Social Side of Medicine.

Dr. Treiber has long supported GSA, being involved since 2005. She said here at GSA, “We foster a community of ideas.” She appreciates how this conference “brings local sociologists together, including our students.”

## Walking Tour Teaching Workshop!

Member-at-Large Allen Hyde and colleague Rebecca Watts-Hull from Georgia Institute of Technology discussed bringing community into the classroom and high impact teaching practices. Then took session participants on a walking tour as we practiced identifying health in our community.



## Congratulations Rita Thomson!

A special Congratulations to GSA member Rita Thomson, who successfully defended her dissertation “Facing the Gray Rhino: Food Pantries in DeKalb County and the Covid-19 Pandemic” last November at Georgia State University. Rita has been a strong supporter of the organization, having attended annual meetings now for over a decade since joining as an undergraduate student while at Kennesaw State University. We are thrilled to see her accomplishment (pictured centered in the group photo at her hooding ceremony). Congratulations Dr. Thomson!



## **Journal of Public and Professional Sociology**

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*The Journal of Public and Professional Sociology* is the official journal of the Georgia Sociological Association. *JPPS* publishes refereed works of research and theory focusing on both public and professional sociology.

For more information, see our Aims and Scope page.

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