
EDA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR REGIONAL AND ECONOMIC INNOVATION ANNOUNCES 2023 PROJECT AWARDS

Spring, 2023

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In 2022, MSU's EDA University Center took to its social media platforms, visited various partners and Economic Development Districts (EDD), invited past innovation fellows, held the annual *Innovate Michigan!* Summit and attended various events during which we engaged individuals to share their thoughts on the emerging economic development issues in the state. This was the beginning of a process that culminated with seeking counsel from our Consultative Panelists, knowledge-based experts from across the state, to build the topical areas of focus for REI in 2023.

This year was one of the most competitive as REI received numerous application submissions within these identified topical areas including clean energy economies; defining equitable economics; circular economies; blight and deconstruction; and Michigan planning organizations leveraging the planning process. In January 2023, the Center announced its 2023 awards for three Co-Learning Plan (CLP) projects, two Innovation Fellowships (IF) and even Student-Led, Faculty-Guided (SLFG) projects.

The Center advances innovation and economic development through CLPs in which multiple parties collaborate to generate innovative economic development tools, models, strategies, policies, and practices. The findings and recommendations that result from these CLPs will serve as a source of current and practical information for local and state economic development practitioners and policymakers as they consider important decisions that affect development efforts within our Michigan communities and regions.

Co-Learning Plans

Congratulations to MSU Co-Learning Plan authors, Dr. Louise Jezierski, Associate Professor of Social Relations at James Madison College (JMC) and Dr. Sejuti Das Gupta, Assistant Professor at JMC on "Making Ends Meet: Women's Work, the Care Sector and Regional Informal Economies of Detroit." This CLP examines how women workers and employers navigate the informal care and personal service sectors of the Detroit metropolitan region, focusing on immigrant and adjacent

neighborhoods. The research inquiry asks: how do women find work in an economic crisis that especially targets traditionally female employment and household social reproduction concerns?

The second CLP was awarded to Hazel Park's Planning Commissioner, Dr. John Parcell, and is titled "Leveraging the Planning Process to Create a Model of Engagement for Communities in Need." This study will focus on leveraging the planning process, which can be difficult due to the lack of capacity, to improve regional efforts in high percentage Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed - also known as ALICE communities.

Co-Learning Plan awardees, MSU Urban and Regional Planning professor Dr. Mark Wilson and Urban and Regional Planning Assistant Professor, Dr. Zeenat Kotval-Karamchandani alongside PhD Urban Planning Student, Shane Wilson, will research "Opportunity or Betrayal?: The Promise and Perils of Electric Mobility." The growing adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) carries many potential benefits for sustainability and mobility, yet not all residents and communities may benefit equally. The authors will examine the social implications of EVs

for ALICE residents of Michigan, both at the state level and in urban/rural areas of concentration. In particular, the focus will be on access to the benefits of EVs (mobility, employment) and experiences of disadvantages such as environmental damage and health.

Innovation Fellows

Another two awards were announced for Innovation Fellowships. These include the Executive Director of the Detroit Community Wealth Fund, Margo Dalal; and Robert Carson, Regional Director of Community Development with Networks Northwest. The Innovation Fellows Program seeks to provide on-the-ground support and coordination to move concepts to actions, implementing new economic development tools, models, and policies.

Introducing incentive and support programs for worker ownership in Michigan can preserve local jobs as business owners retire and increase wealth-building opportunities in low-income communities statewide. Therefore, Fellow Margo Dalal will address the Benefits of Worker-Owned Cooperative Business Development for Low-Income Residents in Michigan. Fellow Robert Carson will focus his work on

"Collaborative Partnership Models: A Case for Increased Capacity and Efficiency." Carson seeks to gain information and data concerning collaborative service partnerships between regional planning entities and local units of government to address opportunities of improvement in the processes, supporting longer term resiliency planning and financial resiliency for those partnered communities.

Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Projects

Seven Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects were also awarded. These projects provide assistance to Michigan communities in completing local and regional economic development initiatives by college and university students from across the state, under the supervision and guidance of experienced faculty. MSU Director of Graduate Recruiting, Department of Computational Mathematics, Science, and Engineering, Dr. Dirk Colbry; Chris Miller, Board Chair of the National Coalition for Community Capital (NC3); and MSU students will secure and analyze data through their SLFG to set a baseline of community impact by projects funded from community capital raises. Simultaneously, MSU

Urban and Regional Planning professor Dr. Zenia Kotval will lead six technical assistance projects across the state. These projects will create a sidewalk inventory for safer routes; build community engagement to guide action strategies, a comprehensive neighborhood redevelopment strategy; a recreation director position feasibility study, a development and finance plan for a key corridor in Lansing; a district improvement plan, development options for district businesses on Main Street, and a vacant parcel reuse plan.

Save the Date!

These projects and more will be presented at the 2023 Innovate Michigan! Summit at the Kellogg Conference Center in Lansing on Thursday, **August 17th**. If you'd like to keep up to date and learn more about the Summit and REI's activities, follow us on social media: FB, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

