

Social Justice Research Center
2020-2021 Academic Year Report

Kate Muir Welsh, Center Director

On behalf of the Social Justice Research Center (SJRC), Kate Muir Welsh provides this review of the 2020-2021 Center activities as well as its activities for the coming year.

Center Staff

Dr. Kate Welsh continues to serve as the center’s active director after taking on the role in January 2012. The 2020-2021 graduate assistant was Logan Armstrong, a first-year graduate student in the Law and Public Administration programs. The center’s previous GA, Conor Mullen took on a supporting role as research coordinator (RC). Kaila Mills, of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, provided administrative support for the SJRC.

Center Expenditures 2020-2021 figures

Expense Type (Example expenses)	Total 2020-2021 Expenses
SJRC Expenses (phone, copies, office supplies, director travel, graduate assistantship, misc. costs)	\$
SJRC Research Grants for Faculty, Staff, and Students	\$
SJRC Campus Support	\$
Total	\$

The SJRC was created in 2007 as a result of the President’s request to use endowment funds, specifically directed to Social Justice related purposes, in ways that would engage faculty more fully in diversity efforts on campus. The idea of a research center seemed to be the best way in which that engagement might be fostered. The SJRC mission statement, developed in 2008, continues to guide the work of the Center:

The Social Justice Research Center at the University of Wyoming is an interdisciplinary center dedicated to the generation of scholarship connected to addressing practical and theoretical questions arising from the pursuit of social justice. The SJRC cultivates social justice-oriented scholarship in the belief that when any segment or community experiences injustice, democratic ideals are at risk. The SJRC supports research scholars (faculty, staff and students) by providing opportunities for collegial exchange, professional development, and financial sponsorship.

2020-2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

To accomplish these ends, during the 2020-2021 academic year, the SJRC engaged in the following activities:

- Offering financial and organizational support to social justice relevant programming on campus;
- Co-sponsoring academic presentations;
- Supporting scholarly inquiry projects by UW students and faculty;
- Co-facilitating the Council on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion's Community Engagement Subcommittee;
- And, continuing to adapt to life and work in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic

These will be discussed more fully below.

COVID-19

As with all facets of life, studies, and work the SJRC was impacted by the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic. In-person meetings, discussions, conferences, and gatherings were postponed, cancelled, or adapted to virtual settings where the spread of the virus could be better contained. The center's staff did well to make the transition in 2020 and continued to assist our 2020 and 2021 researchers with adapting and/or rescheduling their proposed work and postponing a number of final funding requirements.

SJRC Work

- 1) Supported efforts with the Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion through participation and organizational contributions of the GA and RC.
- 2) Supported MLKDOD events with organizational support.
 - RC was a member of the planning committee, book reading subcommittee, marketing subcommittee, and GSA day subcommittee.
- 3) Supported Shepard Symposium on Social Justice events with organization support. The 2019 symposium had been cancelled and postponed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
 - GA was a member of the awards subcommittee.
 - RC was a member of the planning committee, sustainability subcommittee, and virtual planning subcommittee. RC also organized a panel discussion titled "Shepard Shop Talk," focused on the SJRC and featuring five previous/current SJRC scholars.
- 4) The 2021 Call for Proposals for supplemental research funding received

- # applications. The SJRC funded #.
- 5) The 2020-2021 supplemental funding cycle received # requests. The SJRC and ODEI funded #.
 - 6) Held a Scholars Meeting on (DATE), 2021 online and in line with COVID-19 precautions. The meeting provided a virtual space for the SJRC Advisory Board members and SJRC Scholars of the 2019-2020 academic year (See Appendix B for scholars), and the new 2020-2021 Scholars (See Appendix C for scholars) to share research ideas and updates on publications.

Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

University Events and Academic Presentations

During 2020-2021 the SJRC worked with colleges, departments, university, and community groups to co-host events, speakers, and discussions. Efforts that the SJRC supported in sponsorship, co-sponsorship, facilitation, and/or organizing included:

- **Wyoming Latina Leadership Conference, held in October 2020.** Wyoming Latina Youth Conference is a science outreach initiative for young Latinas (junior high and high school girls from across Wyoming). In cooperation with Dr. Cecilia Aragon (director of Latina/o Studies), the SJRC helped lower the costs of scholarships, organizational operating budget, and graduate internships for UW Latina students. During the conference young Latinas experienced a bilingual day of workshops on STEM, leadership, wellness, and creativity.
- **AADS Black History Month events,** supported with funding for speakers at a one-day Black History Month conference in February, 2020.
- **Inclusionary and Global Leadership Program,** helped sponsor and refine diversity, equity, and inclusion workshops for graduate students with Dr. Emily Monago, UW's Chief Diversity Officer and ODEI Graduate Assistant, Morgan Lu. The GA specifically helped to update and further develop a handbook for graduate student workshops.
- **Social Justice/Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Reading Group,** coordinated book discussions on titles/authors focused on social justice related themes, issues, histories, and futures. The SJRC funded most of the book purchases for the group. Below is a list of titles that were read and discussed.

February 2020 – *Kindred* (Octavia Butler)

March 2020 – *There, There* (Tommy Orange)

Summer 2020 – *Becoming* (Michelle Obama)

February 2021 – *Things Fall Apart* (Chinua Achebe)

February 2021 – *A Kind of Freedom* (Margaret Wilkerson Sexton)

October 2021 – *Sabrina & Corina* (Kali Fajardo-Anstine)

· **Climate Justice Discussion Group**, coordinated book discussions on titles/authors focused on environmental justice related themes, issues, histories, and futures. The SJRC funded book purchases for the group and facilitated a virtual film screening. Members of the discussion group belong to both the campus and greater Laramie communities. Below is a list of titles of books and films that were read and discussed.

February 2020 – *Climate Justice* (Mary Robinson)

May 2020 – *Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore* (Elizabeth Rush)

October 2020 – *As Long as the Grass Grows* (Dina Gilio-Whitaker)

April 2021 – *Losing Earth* (Nathaniel Rich)

Summer 2021 – *The Drawdown Review* (Project Drawdown)

Scholarly Projects Funded

A major initiative of the SJRC is to support scholarly projects proposed by students (graduate and undergraduate) as well as by faculty and staff. In the 2020-2021 academic year, we funded # research projects. The funded projects for the 2020-2021 academic year, along with their project investigator, are identified in Appendix C. A number of our 2019-2020 scholars were transferred into the 2020-2021 cohort due to complications that arose for their research around COVID-19. Scholars are expected to complete the following.

- Present work at the Spring 2022 Shepard Symposium for Social Justice;
- Use funds according to the project description, and if funds are to be used for a different purpose, agree to seek and receive written approval from the SJRC director;
- Meet with the SJRC director and other scholars of the Center at least three times in fall 2020 and spring 2021;
- Work with Samantha Peter, Assistant Librarian to upload a final product of their work to Wyoming Scholars Repository (<https://wyoscholar.uwyo.edu/groups>)
- Present a tangible product, article for publication or its equivalent of the project to the SJRC, and
- List the Social Justice Research Center as a supporter of the project in any scholarly dissemination efforts.

2020-2021 GOALS/ACTIVITIES UPDATE

1. Center Organization

1. Conduct SJRC outreach for faculty, staff, students, and community members to expand awareness of SJRC mission and opportunities with use of informational packet developed by RC Conor Mullen.

While acting as 2019-2020 GA, Conor visited A&S Ambassadors meeting to discuss SJRC mission and opportunities. During the Summer 2020, RC developed a one-page info sheet for inclusion in the new UW faculty orientation packet, and other class visit and/or teach-in opportunities.

2. Continue to work with the SJRC Advisory Board.

By the end of the spring 2020 semester, the advisory board had minimal vacancies, but the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic made for another challenging year. Welcoming newcomers to the board and carrying out our annual meetings was a challenge in itself that left little time for bigger advancements.

3. Continue to expand the SJRC Advisory Board and to fill vacant seats.

The board filled seats from the American Heritage Center, UW Art Museum, and Department of Modern & Classical Languages. It still needs representatives from the Engineering Department, Native American and Indigenous Studies Department and Native American Education, Research, and Cultural Center, UW Athletics, and the School of Energy Resources.

4. Maintain SJRC Website and launch SJRC blog platform 'The Conversation.'

Working together the GA and RC maintained the SJRC website, but continued delays on a new UW website blog platform pushed back hopes for launching "The Conversation."

5. Create an editorial calendar to have bi-weekly communication with campus.

Communication may include newsletters, website additions, visits to departments.

In working with members of the Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion's Community Engagement Subcommittee, Director Kate Welsh identified a campus and community shared frustration found in locating and updating existing calendars, as well as an issue related to vetting events and opportunities for a social justice focused calendar. The subcommittee had planned to continue to mull the challenge over and pick back up in the fall semester.

6. Support social justice activities on campus.

Continued financial and personnel support of SSSJ and MLKDOD.

7. Continue to support efforts with the Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion through attendance and organizational contributions of the GA and SJRC staff members.

SJRC GA, RC, and Director all played numerous roles on the council.

8. Others as determined by Advisory Board.

NA

2. Scholarly Efforts

1. Assist 2019 and 2020 scholars with adapting, completing, and/or postponing (as appropriate) research with respect to COVID 19 Pandemic.

Director, GA, and RC worked collaboratively to support a number of 2019 and 2020 scholars to adapt, complete, and/or postpone their research due to COVID-19 related complications. Those 2019 and 2020 scholars that needed to postpone their research until 2021 will be listed in Appendix C with the new 2020/21 scholars.

2. Support 2019 and 2020 SJRC scholars in confirming presentation times/settings at 2021 Shepard Symposium on Social Justice.

With the 2020 Shepard Symposium on Social Justice being postponed until spring 2021, a number of researchers had to resort to presenting at alternative conferences, and some decided to defer to the 2022 symposium. All that being said, the “The Shepard Shop Talk” panel discussion did provide a space for a number of delayed scholars to present and complete their funding requirements.

3. The Center will bring the 2020 research awardees and 2021 scholars together for shared communication/dialogue about the projects in which they are engaged.

Brought 2020 scholars together with 2021 awardees and members of the advisory board for virtual discussion on research.

4. Continue assisting with coordination of a social justice research reading group on campus.

SJRC continued to coordinate SJDEI reading group, as well as Climate Justice reading group despite some challenges.

5. Aid UW departments’ outreach efforts to bring social justice researchers onto campus.

Worked with organizers of Shepard Symposium to plan for online symposium featuring a number of social justice researchers and advocates.

6. Investigate bringing together social justice center directors for a conference.

Workloads and precautions around the pandemic have unfortunately pushed this vision back some.

2021-2022 GOALS/ACTIVITIES

1. Center Organization

- 1.

2. Scholarly Efforts

- 1.

Appendix A: Advisory Board Documents

Social Justice Research Center Advisory Board

The SJRC Advisory Board is made up of volunteers who represent various entities on campus. The list below is our 2020-2021 membership. Our 2021-2022 vacancies are highlighted in yellow.

College	Representative
1. American Heritage Center	Sara Davis (resigned fall 2021)
2. College of Agriculture and Natural Resources	Erin Irick
3. College of Arts and Sciences	Nick Crane
4. College of Business	Andy Arnette
5. Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	Emily Monago (resigned fall 2021)
6. College of Education	
7. College of Health Sciences	Christine Porter
8. College of Law	Melissa Alexander
9. Information Technology/ IT-Client Support Services	Alec Muthig (working out of state 2021-2022)
10. Office of Distance Education Support/ College of Education	Reed Scull
11. School of Energy Resources	
12. Haub School of Environment & Natural Resources	Maggie Bourque
13. UW Libraries	Samantha Peters
14. Wyoming Institute for Disabilities	Valerie Thompson-Ebanks
15. Ellbogen Center for Teaching & Learning	Christi Boggs
16. UW Art Museum	Katie Christensen (resigned fall 2021)

17. College of Engineering & Applied Sciences	Chelsea Escalante
18. Native American & Indigenous Studies/Native American Education, Research, & Cultural Center	
19. UW Athletics	

Social Justice Research Center Advisory Board Member Job Description

The Advisory Board of the Social Justice Research Center provides guidance to the SJRC director. Each member serves a three-year term. Members may renew their terms if desired.

Responsibilities of board members include the following:

- Attend two board meetings per semester
- Serve on a SJRC Advisory Board sub-committee
- Share SJRC information with their unit's faculty, staff, and students
- Participate in SJRC events
- Represent the SJRC at conferences
- Connect faculty, staff, and students with the SJRC
- Write SJRC article/abstract for SJRC newsletter or website once a year
- Find external funding sources for SJRC activities

*Please find a full description of our SJRC Advisory Board Members on the SJRC website.

<http://www.uwyo.edu/sjrc/who-we-are>

Appendix B: SJRC Funded Scholarly Initiatives (2019-2020)

The following scholars received funding to support their projects:

Nevin Aiken (\$2500) Faculty (SPPAIS)

“Youth, Deprivation and Post-conflict Reconciliation in Northern Ireland”

Avalon Fajardo-Anstine (\$3940) Graduate Student (SPPAIS)

“Inter-generational Memory and Solidarity Through Indigenous Environmental Social Justice Across Borders”

Brittney Bulawa (\$1137.16) Graduate Student (Law)

“A Qualitative Study on Criminalization of the Low-Income in Wyoming Municipal Courts”

Yi-Ling Chen (\$1500) Faculty (International Studies)

“Housing, Financialization, and Social Inequality: An International Comparative Study”

Kym Codallos and Susan Dewey (\$1800) Faculty (Social Work)

“Won’t You Be My Neighbor?”

Jeremy Davis (\$500) Staff (CSIL)

“Confluences of Student Leadership and White Racial Identity”

Bianca Estefania Infante De La Cruz (\$3000)

Graduate Student (American Studies)

“High School Youth in Wyoming: Immigration Status and Life Experiences”

Karla Valesca Matute and Libni Berenice Catellon (\$1150)

Graduate Students (Ed Curriculum and Instruction)

“Discursive Assessment Protocol for Supporting Emergent Bilinguals in Mathematics”

Margarita Elena del Carmen Pignataro (\$1850) Faculty (SCGSJ/English)

“Performers of Color in Provincetown: Social Justice in Performance Narratives, Song and Dance”

Sukyung Yoon (\$800) Faculty (Social Work)

“The Protective Factors against Suicidal Behavior among Older Adults Living in Rural Communities”

Appendix C: SJRC Funded Scholarly Initiatives (2020-2021)

The following scholars received funding to support their projects.

Libni Berenice Catellon (\$) Graduate Student (dept)

“The Discursive Mathematics Protocol: Opportunities for Developing Emergent Bilinguals’ Mathematical Reasoning”

Ashley Babcock (\$) Graduate Student (dept)

“An Inventory of North American Indigenous Food Sovereignty Educational Approaches”

Ambreia Fernandez-Meadows (\$) Graduate Student (dept)

“Abortion In Their Own Words: Uplifting the Voices of BIPoC Individuals Who Have Used Abortion To Navigate Reproductive Oppression in Wyoming and Surrounding Areas”

Samuel Choi (\$) Graduate Student (dept)

“Hate is a Virus: Investigating the Relationship between Chinese Phenotypes and COVID-19-Related Prejudice and Discrimination”

Jeremy Davis (\$) Staff (CSIL)

“Co-constructing a Latinx Student Leadership Identity at a Predominately White Institution”

Amanda DeDiego et al (\$) Graduate Student (dept)

“Immigrant Clinicians’ Experiences of Migratory Grief, Social Support, Discrimination, and Professional Quality of Life”

Rebecca Edelmann (\$) Role (dept)

““WHAT IS IT LIKE TO HEAR A HAND”: THE EXPERIENCES OF DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS”

Jill Moeller (\$) Graduate Student (Social Work)

“Home Health Experiences During COVID-19: A Phenomenological Inquiry of Medicaid Community Choices Waiver Service Users”

Diksha Shukla (\$) Faculty (dept)

“Annotation Schema for Early Detection of High-Risk Fake Information”

Derrick Mason & Jane Crayton (\$) Staff (dept)

“Equality is greater than Division =>÷”

Jessica Nelson (\$) Faculty (dept)

“Race, Place, and Language in Virtual Brazil”

Margarita Elena del Carmen Pignataro (\$1850) Faculty (SCGSJ/English)

“Performers of Color in Provincetown: Social Justice in Performance Narratives, Song and Dance”