

**Mansueto Institute  
for Urban Innovation**

**University  
of Chicago**

**Kreisman Initiative  
for Housing Law and Policy**

An aerial photograph of a dense urban neighborhood, likely San Francisco, showing a variety of colorful houses (yellow, orange, white, grey) and green trees. The houses are built on a hillside, and a street with a 'STOP' sign is visible in the lower left. The image is used as a background for the report cover.

# **The Kreisman Graduate Fellows Program Training the Next Generation of Housing Leaders**

**2021-2022  
End of Year Report**



# Overview

The 2021-2022 cohort of Kreisman Graduate Fellows were exposed to the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on housing policy and markets, as well as the affordable housing crisis that has swept the entire country. Through meetings with local housing leaders and their own research, they considered different strategies to address affordable housing, such as changes to zoning laws, increasing the housing inventory, and protecting existing quality affordable housing.

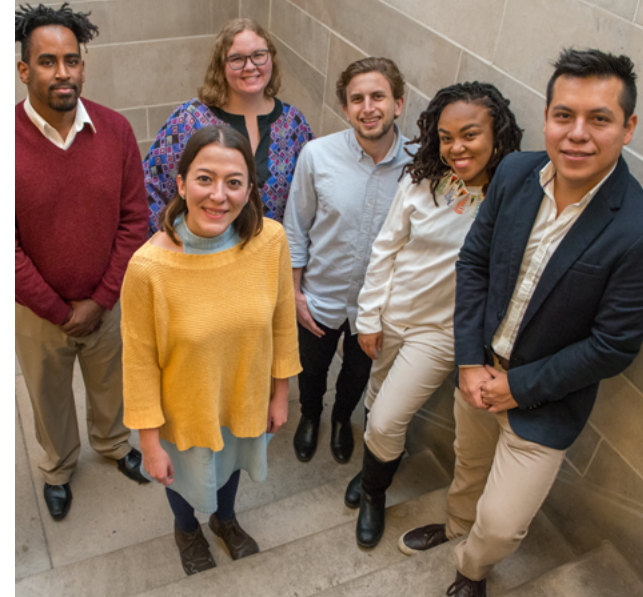
Despite the pandemic, fellows were able to take on a wide array of internship placements and research projects this academic year. This includes working at state and city housing and civic agencies, legal organizations for homeowners and renters, and a developer of affordable housing. Several fellows also conducted research, analyzing new and novel data sets to identify current and predicted trends in housing stability for families and green buildings. Through these professional development experiences, the fellows were able to both provide support to housing organizations adapting to the pandemic and gain important perspective on the implementation of housing policy that will shape their future careers.

The following report summarizes the fellows' activities, engagement, and project work.

The Kreisman Graduate Fellowship brings together students across University of Chicago graduate programs – including policy, social services, law and social sciences – and puts them in conversation with one-another and local leaders to discuss cross-discipline issues of housing. The Fellowship activities emphasize an inter-disciplinary and inter-sector approach to connect ideas and people in unexpected ways, and ultimately to promote a better understanding of housing opportunities and solutions. Now concluding its fourth cohort, the over 30 students who have participated in the Fellowship are laying the foundation for a University of Chicago-trained network of experts who will be ideally positioned to address interrelated systemic challenges around housing law and policy.

## 2021-2022 Kreisman Graduate Fellows by the Numbers:

- 10 graduate fellows
- 5 UChicago graduate programs represented
- 6 housing thought leaders participating in intimate conversations with fellows
- 10 alumni participating in virtual networking event to connect with current fellows





# Speaker Sessions



During the academic year, fellows participated in speaker sessions with leading thinkers in the housing field, with an emphasis on the pandemic's effect on housing, Build Back Better and housing policy, and equitable and affordable housing policy. The shift to virtual enabled fellows to speak not only with Chicago leaders, but also prominent researchers doing national-level analysis. These meetings allowed fellows to gain unfiltered perspective from those on the front lines of housing assistance and response, and ask off-the-record questions about their strategies, challenges, lessons learned, and predictions of what would come next. Fellows benefited from each other's unique points of view, and cross-disciplinary perspectives.

## November 2021

**Andrew Geer**, Founding Principal, Blue Eddy Community Advisors, Former Vice President and Chicago Market Lead, Enterprise Community Partners

**The nexus of housing, health and equity.** With 20 years of experience in community development, this session explored three emergent trends in Chicago affordable housing: 1) racial equity as a framework informing public investment, 2) health and resilience as forces shaping housing interventions and 3) the massive influx of resources for affordable housing production resulting from COVID-19 recovery acts. Discussion covered the City of Chicago's first ever racial equity impact assessment to analyze disparities in housing inventory and populations being served, as well as growing recognition of housing as a public health issue in terms of reducing carbon emissions from the built environment and social wellness outcomes.

## January 2022

**Sheila Sutton**, Policy Organizer, Housing Action Illinois

**Housing policy advocacy and Build Back Better in our state.** Housing Action IL is a 160+ member coalition dedicated to protecting and expanding the availability of quality, affordable housing. This session discussed the ecosystem of partners – including housing counseling agencies, homeless service providers, affordable housing developers, and policymakers – involved in advocating for just housing policies statewide. Conversation covered Housing Action's recent work around Build Back Better, and their general approach to policy research related to homelessness, rental protections/affordability, and affordable homeownership.

## February 2022

### **Alumni Networking Session & Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) Communities Presentation**

**Alumni career guidance.** For the first-time, current fellows and alumni in Chicagoland had the opportunity to exchange career advice and experiential knowledge of the housing field in an in-person networking session. This event also featured a lightning talk from Kreisman alumni Lauren Kataja, who oversees community impact operations and data analysis for POAH Communities, including measuring resident outcomes across six focus areas: housing, education, health, community engagement, employment, and financial stability - to tell the story of POAH's community support as well as identify organizational opportunities for the future.



# March 2022

## Project and Internships Peer Workshopping Session

**Peer career guidance.** This session dedicated to peer workshopping gave fellows an opportunity to tease out difficult policy and research issues arising during their project work. Fellows were able to help each other connect the dots to suggest possible solutions and have increased visibility into the organizations other fellows were supporting.

# May 2022

## Kreisman Initiative for Law & Housing Policy Symposium: “Beyond the Single-Family Home: Zoning, Equity, and Access”

**Housing affordability and zoning.** The first Kreisman Initiative for Law & Housing Policy Symposium, “Beyond the Single-Family Home: Zoning, Equity, and Access,” took place on May 16, 2022, at the David Rubenstein Forum at University of Chicago. The convening centered around exclusionary zoning practices in U.S. cities, like zoning for single-family homes over denser housing such as apartments, townhomes, and duplexes, and how it impacts housing affordability. Experts from Chicago and around the country in city government, housing organizations, design, and academia, shared strategies to address this complex problem, including creating more alternate dwelling units, changing city and state laws, and mobilizing communities. Visit [kreisman-symposium.event.uchicago.edu](https://kreisman-symposium.event.uchicago.edu) for video of the symposium.



The first Kreisman Symposium on May 16, 2022, “Beyond the Single-Family Home: Zoning, Equity, and Access.”





# Research Projects and Internships



Each fellow receives funding to support their professional development in the form of a research project or internship of their own design. The goal is to provide fellows with an opportunity to pursue a hands-on experience related to housing scholarship or practice that they wouldn't have otherwise been able to pursue.



## Jack Carey

**MPP, Harris School of Public Policy and MBA, Booth School of Business  
Community Development Finance and Real Estate Internship with Andrew Geer,  
Blue Eddy Consulting**

Jack worked with Andy Geer and his firm Blue Eddy Community Advisors to help advise 548 Capital and Chicago Metropolitan Housing Development Corporation (CMHDC) on various community development finance and real estate projects.

With 548 Capital, Jack worked on financing efforts with the team developing 3831 W. Chicago Avenue, a planned 60-unit housing development with ground-floor grocery in the West Humboldt Park neighborhood of Chicago. The building, which will create both affordable and environmentally sustainable housing, is located along an Invest South/West commercial corridor — a program designed to bring investment to historically neglected areas in Chicago.

Jack also helped consult CMHDC on developing plans for an affordable housing impact investment fund. He was responsible for financial modeling and underwriting efforts, in addition to putting together a prospectus to help market and secure capital for the impact fund.



## Spencer Caro

**JD, Law School  
Foreclosure Intake Fellowship with Chicago Volunteer Legal Services**

Spencer will volunteer as a foreclosure intake fellow with Chicago Volunteer Legal Services (CVLS), the oldest provider of free and reduced-cost civil legal aid in Chicago. He will focus on conducting intake interviews with potential clients facing foreclosure proceedings. As an intake fellow, Spencer will be one of the first lines of contact with people experiencing complex and potentially life-altering legal disputes. He will learn about their situations and evaluate the viability of their cases alongside attorneys at CVLS. The people who need legal help the most are also the least likely to get it, and Spencer hopes to help fix this asymmetry by volunteering with CVLS to reduce housing instability in Chicago.





## Anthony Ivy

**MBA, Booth School of Business**

**Research project on the undervaluation of real estate**

Anthony's research focused on the undervaluation of real estate in urban communities. Across the United States there have been reports of African American homeowners receiving appraisals that are below the value of their local markets. The approach that Anthony has taken to understand the undervaluation issue is focusing on the regulatory environment to understand what regulatory bodies can police the appraisal industry, and what resources are needed to equip the regulatory bodies with the tools needed to fight this systemic issue. Anthony's work consisted of conducting interviews with the regulatory agencies of Chicago to pinpoint areas that lack oversight in the appraisal industry. He analyzed data from many sources to highlight areas in urban communities where the data projections of value differ from the sold prices in the communities. Anthony plans to continue his research and build tools that will make oversight of undervaluation in communities of color easy to police by the regulatory bodies of Chicago.

## Bethel Kifle

**MSW, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice**

**Internship with Illinois Justice Project**

Bethel worked with the Illinois Justice Project (ILJP), focused on designing a reentry process and transitional housing protocol for the Illinois Reentry Council to support incarcerated individuals released under the Joe Coleman Medical Release Act (JCMRA). The bill went into effect in January 2022 and creates a path for the release of medically infirm incarcerated individuals by the Prison Review Board (PRB). However, at that time there was no clear reentry process for individuals released under JCMR, and the complexities were only compounded for people experiencing chronic health issues. ILJP is positioned to facilitate a cross-agency collaboration between the Illinois Reentry Council, Department of Corrections, Illinois Department of Aging, and community providers, including housing organizations, to create a comprehensive reentry plan. Bethel supported ILJP's efforts by researching and developing policy recommendations for older adults or adults with terminal illness released from carceral settings and collaborate with other relevant organizations. She also established a subcommittee under the Illinois Reentry Council dedicated to the JCMRA to oversee the release process and determine which organizations could best support individuals and their families and establish cohesive coordination from release to death to account for housing, medical, funeral, or additional costs.



## Brenda Li

**MS, Computational Analysis and Public Policy, Harris School of Public Policy**

**Research Project with the Lawyer's Committee for Better Housing**

Brenda collaborated with the Lawyer's Committee for Better Housing (LCBH) to enhance the [Chicago Evictions Data Portal](#) and contribute to provisioning this important public resource. Quality eviction data is a crucial tool for understanding and addressing the eviction crisis. However, there currently lacks a standardized, national database that tracks evictions. Instead, the only eviction databases that exist are those compiled by individual cities or organizations, which can be challenging to maintain let alone develop into sophisticated tools. Brenda began by conducting several data tasks for LCBH, including creating consistent geocoding to allow eviction data to be expanded to all of Cook County, incorporating standardized geographic boundaries into the eviction data to increase ease in interpreting and communicating what's happening within districts, and providing automated codes to perform these spatial geoprocessing steps easily in the future. She then used the cleaned database to examine the timeline of evictions from case filing to completion, and the effect of an enacting housing policy on eviction rates. Brenda's work helps set precedents to drive the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to establish a national evictions database.



## Marc David Loeb

**MS, Computational Analysis and Public Policy, Harris School of Public Policy**  
**Research project with Emily Talen, Professor of Urbanism, University of Chicago**

Marc conducted a research project alongside Professor Emily Talen to better understand the broader spatial patterns of housing unit change around Chicago's transit stations. The trend of demolishing or deconverting two- to four-flat building types and replacing with single-family homes, luxury units, or non-residential uses is well documented in Chicago over the past several decades. However, Marc's research aimed to fill a knowledge gap to understand the full set of ramifications of this pattern as it pertains to affordability, transit access, and neighborhood equity. Using data from the American Community Survey and U.S. Census, Marc analyzed changes in unit density, housing type, and demographics in areas around Chicago's CTA stations. He also analyzed housing policy interventions protecting residential density in other municipalities. His analysis suggests there exists a strong correlation between access to the "L" and high incomes. Residents of areas far away from CTA stations are more likely to struggle to pay for housing and have longer commutes, reflecting the fact that many of Chicago's working class neighborhoods are served exclusively by buses. The character of Chicago's built environment is closely related to its transportation system. Buildings closer to the CTA are more likely to be renter occupied, and less likely to be single family homes.





## Bennett Miller

**MA, Program in the Social Sciences, Social Science Division  
Internship with the Chicago Covenants Project**

Ben worked with the Chicago Covenants Project led by Professor LaDale Winling of Virginia Tech, an initiative to discover, document, and analyze every restrictive/racial housing covenant ever instituted in Chicago and Cook County, with the end goal of building a coalition to address the inequitable impact of these covenants. Ben recruited and trained volunteers on how to find these documents in the Cook County archives and helped build relationships with organizational partners to expand this work. He also established processes and infrastructure to scale the number of volunteers supporting the project. Ben was responsible for conducting analysis in the form of mapping the covenant documents and researching their language and origins. While the Chicago Covenants Project is ongoing, Ben's efforts were central in constructing a practical and conceptual framework of the application of these housing covenants toward a more equitable future.



## Fern Ramoutar

**PhD, Economics, Booth School of Business  
Research project on landlords, renters, and concentration**

Fern's research studies the relationship between rental market concentration and rental prices in Chicago. This is in response to two recent market trends: 1) an upward trend in renting among households and 2) rents becoming increasingly unaffordable in some major cities. While the housing market is studied extensively, there is limited evidence in the literature on what factors affect affordability in the private rental market in the U.S. In other national markets, part of this issue has been tied to concentration: increased building ownership by a small number of landlords.



## Patricia (Sabaha) Lee Round

**PhD, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice  
Research on categorizing youth as homeless in the U.S.**

Patricia's research focuses on the ethical processes involved in categorizing youth as homeless in the U.S. Taking as a premise that homeless youth are not a pre-given demographic — who simply need to be identified, counted, and legislated — she studies homeless identity formation as an accomplishment of legislative and social practices beyond one's mere housing status. Using social science theories of design allows the study of homeless youth as a historically changing and changeable category, weighted by the moral parameters of the day. For her Kreisman project, she focused her dissertation research on the 1973 Runaway Youth Act — the first legislation of its kind addressing unhoused youth — investigating archives in Indiana and Washington, D.C. Her preliminary findings suggest that the inception of homeless youth legislation was interested in providing care only to the extent that it abated an assumed criminality, rather than implementing robust housing and services for a diverse demographic of young people experiencing housing instability. As she continues her fieldwork, Sabaha will study the 1984 and 2018 Acts, as well as corresponding media, to continue her exploration of the moral and legislative economies through which homeless youth definitions emerge.



## Forum Shelatt

**MPP, Harris School of Public Policy  
Internship with the Texas Homelessness Network**

Forum interned with the Texas Homelessness Network, conducting research for their Homeless Encampment project. Her work focused on HB1278, which relates to public hearings on homelessness issues for Texas and contacting state legislators in preparation for Homelessness Awareness Day and next session in 2023. Forum also helped update the Texas Housing Inventory Courts report. She collected and compiled statewide data and used the findings to generate a map demonstrating increase in demand for shelters in areas of the state with high rates of displacement.



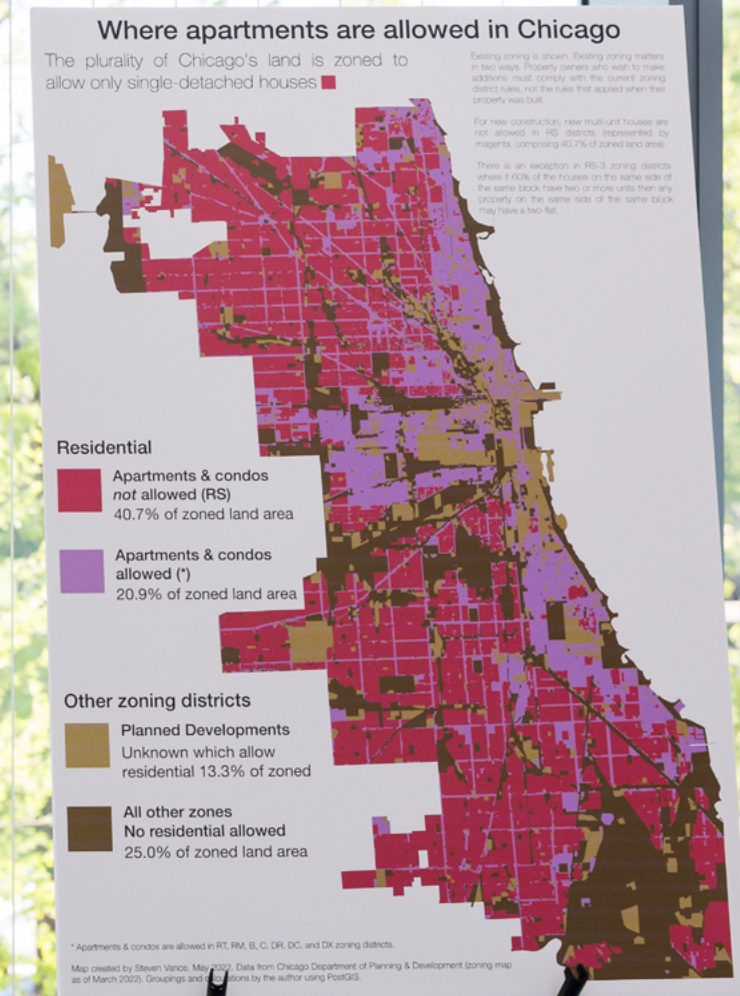
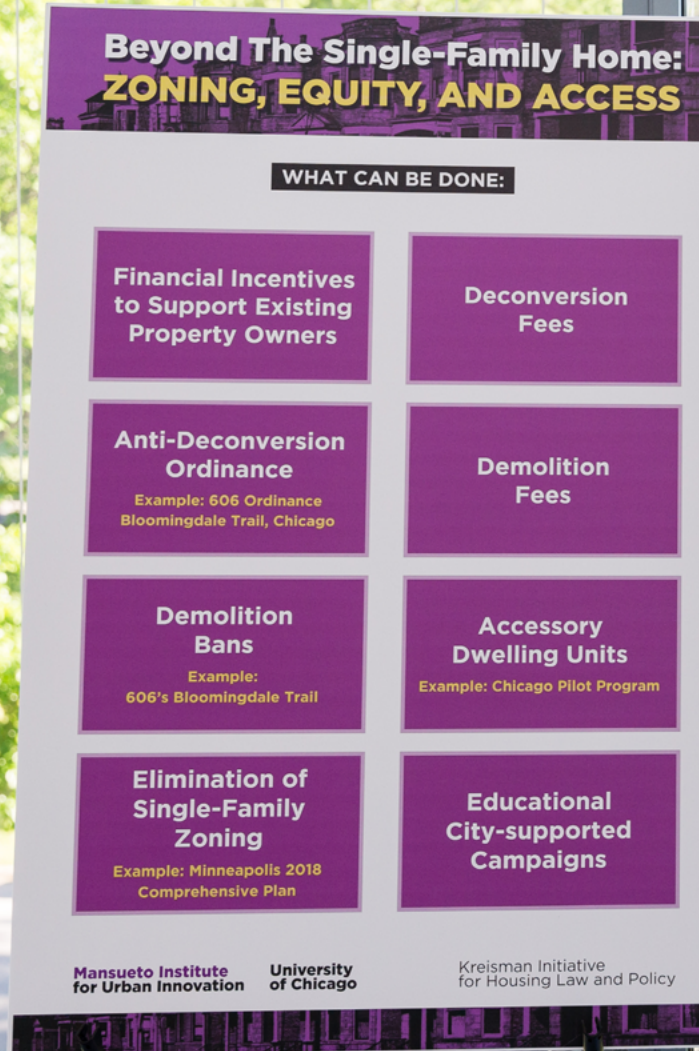
# Prior Year Kreisman Graduate Fellowship Highlights

## Sampling of topics explored in past Fellowship projects and internships:

- Predictive models around building abandonment in Chicago
- Spatial access to public goods for Chicago Housing Authority residents
- Cash home buying practices in cities during the Great Recession
- History of exclusionary zoning, upzoning and disparate impact claims under the Fair Housing Act
- Homeless youth service providers accessing funding resources and award criteria
- Historical progression and current state of multifamily housing in Brazilian markets
- Equitable transit-oriented development in Chicago to improve neighborhood quality of life

## Kreisman Fellowship Alumni working in the field:

- Chicago Housing Authority
- Housing Authority of Champaign County
- School of Social Work, Aurora University
- Federal Reserve Banks of Chicago & Philadelphia
- Goulston & Storrs, Land Use and Real Estate Practice
- CIM Group
- Results for America







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