





Photo by Elizabeth Folger

As we celebrate IPR's 55th year, I'm filled with gratitude for the vibrant intellectual community we've built. This milestone reminds us of IPR's mission to advance evidence-based solutions to society's toughest challenges—a mission that only grows more important with time.

This year, IPR faculty continued their tradition of research excellence, tackling urgent issues with creativity and rigor. Their work deepened our understanding of immigration, elections, partisanship, the replication crisis in science, racial disparities in health, and more.

Our faculty also took their research into the policy arena. IPR researchers contributed to the U.S. Surgeon General's advisory declaring gun violence a public health crisis, and to the President's 2024 economic report—with economist **Kirabo Jackson** contributing as part of the White House Council of Economic Advisers. We co-hosted stellar lectures with scholars Ruha Benjamin and Alondra Nelson, supported EC*REACH in convening a landmark early childhood education conference, and explored critical topics like neighborhood improvement and American democracy in events here on campus and on Capitol Hill.

IPR's growing reputation is reflected in the honors our faculty have earned. Among them, **Sally Nuamah** received the W.E.B. Du Bois Distinguished Book Award, and two of our fellows, **Sera Young** and **Michael Kraus**, joined the ranks of Morton O. Schapiro IPR Fellows. Our new Associate Director **Laurel Harbridge-Yong** and incoming cohort of faculty this fall—the largest in years—have brought fresh energy and new ideas to our work.

None of this would be possible without the incredible contributions of our staff, postdoctoral fellows, and student research assistants. Thank you for your unwavering dedication.

Looking ahead, we're launching two new visiting fellowships to bring policymakers and scholars into closer dialogue. I hope you'll stay connected with these programs and with IPR research through our website, Monday colloquia, and ongoing 55th anniversary events. I look forward to continuing our shared effort to advance research that addresses the most pressing challenges of our time.

Andrew V. Papachristos
IPR Director and the John G. Searle Professor of Sociology

On the cover, clockwise from top left:

IPR social psychologist **Eli Finkel** meets with students at Northwestern's Global Hub.
Photo by Laura McDermott

IPR anthropologist **Sera Young** (far right) discusses research with her co-authors, community organizer Vanessa Bly (far left) and Juliana Feng (center), a graduate student in Northwestern's Department of Biomedical Engineering.
Photo by Laura McDermott

IPR Associate Director and political scientist **Laurel Harbridge-Yong** and IPR Director and sociologist **Andrew Papachristos** sit outside IPR's office at 2040 Sheridan Road.
Photo by Laura McDermott

IPR developmental psychologist **Michael Kraus** shares the findings of his study with members of his lab, including postdoctoral scholar Chyei Vinluan.
Photo by Laura McDermott

In the Social Cognition and Intergroup Processes (SCIP) lab, IPR psychologist **Sylvia Perry** goes over a project with IPR graduate research assistant Jonathan Doriscar.
Photo by Rob Hart

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Institute for Policy Research

Andrew V. Papachristos
Director and the John G. Searle Professor

Laurel Harbridge-Yong
Associate Director and Professor of Political Science

Francesca Gaiba
Sr. Director of Operations and Outreach and Research Professor

Patricia Reese
Director of Communications

Christen Gall
Senior Communications Coordinator

Brochure design by Jeanine Shimer and Christen Gall

Address all correspondence to:
Northwestern University
Institute for Policy Research
2040 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60208

ipr@northwestern.edu
www.ipr.northwestern.edu

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SURGEON GENERAL DECLARES GUN VIOLENCE A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

In June 2024, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy declared gun violence a public health crisis due to the sharp rise in firearm injuries since 2020. A first-of-its-kind report issued by Murthy examines the crisis, drawing on evidence including research from five IPR faculty.

“Calling collective action on firearm injury and mortality as a public health crisis is something we can and must attend to,” chair and professor of medical social sciences and IPR associate **Rinad Beidas** said.

The report cites a study on community violence interventionists in Chicago by IPR Director and sociologist **Andrew Papachristos** and his colleagues at CORNERS, the Center for Neighborhood Engaged Research & Science. The study finds that 94% of these workers showed signs of secondary traumatic stress, such as emotional numbness and difficulty sleeping.

Survivors of school shootings face long-term mental health consequences. The report includes research by IPR economists **Molly Schnell** and **Hannes Schwandt** showing in the two years



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following a fatal school shooting, antidepressant use among local youth went up by 21%.

Surviving a firearm injury can have both short- and long-term health effects. The report cites a study by Beidas looking at the long-term damage of firearm injuries and exposure to others' injuries on children's mental and physical health.

The report also features a study by behavioral scientist and IPR associate **Linda Teplin**. It shows that people with serious mental illness are more likely to be victims of violence themselves, even after accounting for other factors.

CENTERS TAKE ON WORKERS' RIGHTS AND HEALTHY DISAGREEMENT



L. McDermott

Eli Finkel (left) meets with postdoctoral fellow Abdo Elnakouri and PhD students Molly Weinstein and Trevor Spelman (left to right).

Two IPR faculty launched new research centers this year, focusing on workers' rights and constructive discourse in a polarized society.

The Workplace Justice Lab at Northwestern, launched by IPR political scientist **Daniel Galvin**, is a sister organization of the Workplace Justice Lab at Rutgers University.

Along with conducting research, the lab helps state and local agencies improve their

enforcement of labor standards through a program called “Beyond the Bill.”

Through another program, “Build the Base,” they teach alt-labor groups about cutting-edge organizational models used by successful worker centers to help grow their memberships and establish more democratic leadership structures.

The Center for Enlightened Disagreement, co-directed by IPR social psychologist **Eli Finkel** and Kellogg professor Nour Kteily, encourages healthy debate in a polarized climate.

The center's vision is to create space for conversation around the subject of disagreement across disciplines, industries, and ideologies. It will also expand research on methods for promoting dialogue among those with different perspectives and motivations.

“Disagreement is the lifeblood of innovation, but it can run amok,” Finkel said. “We founded the center to push people, organizations, and societies to harness the power of disagreement while minimizing its perils.”

NEW EXPERTS JOIN IPR TO STRENGTHEN POLICY INNOVATION

In September 2024, IPR welcomed 14 new faculty members, marking its largest cohort since 2016. Exploring diverse topics like artificial intelligence (AI), teen brain development, and bias in language, they add to the more than 170 faculty advancing IPR's mission of conducting rigorous research with real-world impact.

"Policy is everywhere and touches everything we do, and our faculty are diving deep into how these dynamics play out in various spaces," said IPR Director **Andrew Papachristos**.

The new IPR fellows are computer scientist **Jessica Hullman**; psychologists **Katie Insel**, **Michael Kraus**, and **Ivuoma Onyeador**; computational linguist **Rob Voigt**; and sociologist **Kate Weisshaar**. They bring expertise on issues such as workplace inequality, AI-driven decision making, and racial disparities in police language.

IPR's support for faculty includes the Morton O. Schapiro (MOS) Fellowships, honoring the IPR economist and former Northwestern president. This fall, anthropologist **Sera Young** and social psychologist **Michael Kraus** joined as MOS fellows.



MOS Fellow Michael Kraus meets with members of his Contending with Societal Inequality Lab.

Eight new faculty associates also joined in September: computer scientists **Kristian Hammond** and **V.S. Subrahmanian**, operations scholar **David Morton**, political scientist **Martin Naunov**, management scholar **Hatim Rahman**, sociologists **Doron Shiffer-Sebba** and **Oscar Stuhler**, and learning scientist **Sepehr Vakili**.

By uniting scholars across fields, IPR addresses society's most pressing issues with multifaceted perspectives that advance evidence-based policy.

UNDERGRADUATES LEARN HOW RESEARCH ADDRESSES SOCIAL ISSUES



Students in the SURA program attend a training on May 17, 2024, learning how to use university resources to conduct research.

IPR is shaping the next generation of researchers through its Summer Undergraduate Research Assistants (SURA) Program. Each summer, students gain hands-on experience tackling societal challenges while working with IPR faculty.

This year, 37 students joined the program, exploring issues like education inequality and threats to democracy. SESP senior **Sarah Abara** worked with IPR statistician **Elizabeth Tipton** to analyze K–5 testing data and identify disparities between Black and non-Black students.

"As a future researcher, it definitely illuminated my knowledge in the world of education policy," Abara said.

Tipton said she enjoyed learning about Abara's experience as a student and helping her think through different careers. "It was fun to see her beginning to make connections between her coursework and her social justice interests, and to see how her skill set could be useful in the policy world," Tipton said.

Weinberg junior **Inaya Hussain** worked with communications and policy scholar and IPR associate **Erik Nisbet** on projects exploring technology, media, and public policy. She trained an artificial intelligence program to detect climate misinformation and gathered research on democratic backsliding.

Hussain believes research skills will always be valuable, as research is about quickly adapting and processing large volumes of information, and "having the faith in yourself to be able to create knowledge if you can't find it anywhere else. My experiences this summer will help me through my life!"

IPR: Where research and policy meet



Photo by Peter Goldberg



Photo by White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention

At the Institute for Policy Research, our faculty know that the best policies need rigorous evidence to help shape them if they are going to be effective and change people's lives. That's why they are dedicated to working on policy-relevant research that has an impact beyond Northwestern. Our faculty are sharing their research with the public and starting important conversations within our own community about society's most pressing social issues.

IPR economist **Kirabo Jackson** (top left) gave the annual Annenberg Distinguished Lecture at Brown University's Annenberg Institute on Nov. 14, 2024, sharing the importance and benefits of public investments in children.

CORNERS Executive Director **Soledad Adrianzén McGrath** (top right) joined 40 leaders working on community safety for a White House Roundtable on "Addressing Gun Violence in Latino Communities" on Oct. 11, 2024.

In a joint IPR and Medill Distinguished Public Policy Lecture on March 27, 2024, sociologist and former White House official **Alondra Nelson** (bottom left) discussed AI with IPR Director **Andrew Papachristos** (bottom right). Nelson shared insights on how to govern AI, taken from her work in the Biden administration and her research.

Photo by Rob Hart



Studying Early Childhood in Chicago

On June 10, 2024, the Early Childhood Research Alliance of Chicago (EC*REACH) hosted an early childhood research conference in Chicago. Led by faculty co-directors **Terri Sabol** (right) and **Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach**, executive director **Maia Connors**, and senior advisor and advisory board chair **John Q. Easton**, EC*REACH seeks to be a research hub in the city for scholars and educators.

L. McDermott



Examining Tribal Constitutions

IPR sociologist **Beth Redbird** (right) co-leads the Tribal Constitutions Project with Northwestern law professor Erin Delaney to understand the content of tribal constitutions and how they were created. With support from the National Science Foundation, the project has gathered over 1,000 North American tribal constitutions and associated documents written between 1934 and 2020.

P. Reese



Bolstering Evidence, Solving Crises

To produce reliable evidence for policymakers—and tackle challenges like the replication crisis—researchers must use rigorous methods. Experts like **Beth Tipton** (pictured), co-director of the Center for Statistics for Evidence-Based Policy and Practice (STEPP), develop ways to strengthen study designs and then share these methods with other researchers, amplifying their collective impact.

R. Hart



Cleaning Up Water in Greater Chicago

On March 9, 2024, President Biden signed spending legislation into law, which included funding to study rapid at-home lead tests in Chicago. Husband-wife team Julius Lucks (far right), a chemical and biological engineer at Northwestern, and IPR anthropologist **Sera Young** (second from right), worked with Sen. Dick Durbin (left) and his staff to push for the funding to improve water in the Chicago area.

Courtesy of S. Young



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191

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64

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72

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OUR WORK

304

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MAJOR ONLINE
NEWS OUTLETS

110

PEER-REVIEWED
ARTICLES BY FELLOWS

415

WORKING
PAPERS
2014 – 2024

70

BOOKS
PUBLISHED
2014 – 2024

OUR AWARDS

13

CARNEGIE, GUGGENHEIM,
MACARTHUR, AND MAJOR
PRIZE AWARD WINNERS*

2014 – 2024

44

NATIONAL
ACADEMY
MEMBERSHIPS

Figures are as of September 2024 for faculty, unless indicated otherwise above.

*Includes the Yidan Prize, José Vasconcelos World Award of Education, and J. S. and H. F. Guggenheim awards.

Institute for Policy Research
Northwestern University
2040 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60208

www.ipr.northwestern.edu
ipr@northwestern.edu
@IPRatNU



Stefanie DeLuca speaks to Theron Pride from the Center for Justice Innovation after a Capitol Hill policy briefing on Oct. 9, 2024.

D.C. BRIEFING: IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOODS TO IMPROVE LIVES

Neighborhoods are more than just physical spaces—they are communities shaped by people, institutions, and the connections that bind them together. At an Oct. 9, 2024, briefing on Capitol Hill, IPR Director **Andrew Papachristos** discussed how policies influence these spaces and beyond.

“Policies we make have a tremendous impact, not just on the people living in particular physical neighborhoods, but on America more broadly, and the inequality we see,” he said during opening remarks to the nearly three dozen researchers, congressional staffers, and government employees attending.

Studies show that residents of impoverished U.S. neighborhoods face poorer health, more stress, higher rates of violence, and shorter life expectancies. Papachristos, IPR economist and then-White House Council of Economic Advisers member **Kirabo Jackson**, Johns Hopkins sociologist **Stefanie DeLuca**, and Stanford sociologist **Sean Reardon** discussed how policies on housing, education, and public safety can bridge the gap.

Jackson discussed the power of place and explained how investing in children through K–12 funding, childcare block grants, and universal pre-K programs not only boosts economic mobility but strengthens local economies.

DeLuca emphasized the importance of “geography of opportunity,” illustrating how housing initiatives like Creating Moves to Opportunity enable families to access higher-quality neighborhoods, which significantly enhance economic mobility and life outcomes.

Papachristos shared insights on community violence intervention (CVI) programs that leverage the lived experiences of those impacted by gun violence to make neighborhoods safer. He underscored the need for support for CVI workers who often face considerable risks.

Reardon spotlighted educational disparities, pointing out that schools in wealthier areas generally have greater resources, which directly improves student outcomes. He argued that targeted policies, affordable housing investments, and increased early education access could reduce inequality.