As we celebrate the RGK Center’s 20th anniversary in the midst of a global pandemic and a national civil rights movement, we renew our commitment to preparing the next generation of nonprofit and philanthropic leaders through education and research. The work of our students and alumni amplifies my hope for a brighter future. I am delighted to share that Dr. Patrick Bixler and Sydney Wilburn have joined the RGK Center team in new roles and will be critical in shaping that future for years to come. While they may be familiar faces, I invite you to join me in extending a warm welcome to Patrick and Sydney.

This spring, a new cohort of students graduated with their certificate in Nonprofit Studies through the RGK Center, representing seven colleges on campus. We launched a new international course, Civil Society in Israel, and our CONNECT program completed its successful first year, matching graduate students with organizations (from the 40 Acres to Guatemala) in need of data or evaluation support to broaden the impact of their work. Indeed, we continue to foster a culture of community-university collaboration through our programs and research.

As we reflect upon these accomplishments, we acknowledge the responsibility the nonprofit community has to contributing solutions to our country’s most pressing issues surrounding equity and race. We challenge ourselves to consider ways the RGK Center can listen to and engage with communities to promote social justice, and this work is underway. We are proud of the leadership of our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community partners and believe their contributions will continue to make a significant and sustainable impact on the world.

This report outlines some of the Center’s most notable highlights and achievements in the past year, but by no means reflects all of what makes the RGK Center shine. I look to the future with optimism, pride, and gratitude to be with you - deep in the heart and science of philanthropy.

Warm regards,

David Springer
The RGK Center is excited to announce that **Dr. Patrick Bixler** has been appointed as a tenure-track Assistant Professor. Dr. Bixler’s fields of expertise include environment and natural resources, urban policy and governance, nonprofit and philanthropic studies, network science, and sustainability science. He has had previous academic positions at Texas A&M University, the University of Oregon, and a post-doctoral appointment at the Pinchot Institute for Conservation in Washington, DC.

Dr. Bixler teaches interdisciplinary courses such as *Program Evaluation for Nonprofit, Public, and Social Impact Initiatives* and *Mobilizing the Community and Engaging Volunteers*. He also directs the CONNECT Program, which matches the data projects of nonprofit organizations with graduate students seeking applied evaluation or measurement-related experience. To read the LBJ School’s official announcement regarding Dr. Bixler’s appointment, click [here](#).

The RGK Center has hired a full-time employee in the new position of Senior Outreach Program Coordinator. **Sydney Wilburn** is a graduate of the LBJ School of Public Affairs and completed the Nonprofit Studies portfolio program through the RGK Center. Sydney was also a participant of the CONNECT program. Sydney earned her undergraduate degree in Print and Digital Journalism from the University of North Texas. She completed a year of AmeriCorps service at UT Austin as a Program Outreach VISTA with the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life. In this new position at the RGK Center, Sydney coordinates RGK Center communications and programming while providing support for additional Center initiatives such as the CONNECT and portfolio programs.
The **Nonprofit Studies portfolio program** is an opportunity to develop and advance skills in nonprofit management, philanthropy, data management and evaluation, cultural policy, social finance and marketing, and community collaboration. This spring, **17 students from seven graduate schools** across campus graduated with the Nonprofit Studies certification. *To read about some of this spring's graduates, click here.*

**2020 Portfolio Graduate Highlight**

*Brent Fields, PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy, College of Education*

Brent was an active student of the Nonprofit Studies portfolio program. He took several courses through the RGK Center, including Charlee Garden's Leadership Lab, which he describes as a "transformational experience" in his education and growth as a leader. He even set up a weekly independent study with leadership expert and retired professor Dr. Howard Prince, an opportunity Brent says his position as an RGK portfolio student helped him secure. Brent is the CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters Central Texas and defended his dissertation early this summer, titled "Presidential Transitions: The Profiles, Plans, and Perspectives of Texas' Community College Presidents."

"Being part of the RGK portfolio program afforded me access to resources and experiences within ...Public Affairs that gave me a more well-rounded academic experience at UT - complimenting the awesome experience of my coursework within the College of Education."

*Brent Fields, Spring 2020 portfolio graduate*
Kozmetsky Fellowships are competitive full-tuition scholarships awarded to students interested in careers in the nonprofit and philanthropic sector. A critical goal of the fellowship is to reduce the debt burden of students. Two incoming Kozmetsky Fellow awards have been made and accepted for Fall 2020 to Cara Cook, a development and fundraising coordinator at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri pursuing a Master’s in Public Affairs and Joycelyn Ovalle, a Research Associate at the Urban Institute in Washington D.C. who will be starting the LBJ School’s Ph.D. program.
KOZMETSKY FELLOWS

CARA COOK, MPAFF PROGRAM

JOYCELYN OVALLE, PH.D. PROGRAM

KOZMETSKY FELLOW UPDATES

BECCA BICE (MPAFF ‘20)
Project Manager of Family Connects at United Way for Greater Austin

LIN RUI LI-ALCORN (MPAFF/MBA ‘20)
Senior Financial Analyst, Intel

ANGELICA FERRANDINO (MPAFF ‘19)
Child Health Project Coordinator, Texas Pediatric Society

JACLYN LE (MPAFF/MBA ‘19)
Consultant, TIP Strategies, focused on strategic planning for economic development
The CONNECT program seeks to build greater data, measurement and evaluation capacity within community organizations. The program offers personalized intake with nonprofit organizations who have data and evaluation projects, and connects them with skilled graduate students. CONNECT Student Fellowships and customized project support are important program features. The program is proving successful at satisfying nonprofits' need to access analytical talent, as well as providing applied research and nonprofit career opportunities for graduate students. CONNECT celebrated its first full year in the spring. To date, the program has awarded more than $165,000 in fellowship funds to participating graduate students and has facilitated 90 projects with 57 different community organizations. The CONNECT program is funded by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation and the St. David's Foundation. Click on the links below to read more about some of our highlighted projects.

- Caritas of Austin
- Serve Austin Collaborative
- UT Charles A. Dana Center

Alyssa Studer manages the CONNECT program. Prior to joining the RGK Center team, Alyssa taught high school chemistry and coached women’s soccer and cross country in Fort Worth ISD and Austin ISD. Most recently, she worked with the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation as their Central Texas Data Contractor. Alyssa graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison with degrees in Botany and Environmental Studies and was a member of the 2014 Teach For America – Dallas/Fort Worth Corps.
The RGK Center partnered with United Ways of Texas, OneStar Foundation, and the Center for Nonprofits and Philanthropy at Texas A&M University to tell the economic story of nonprofit organizations in Texas through the Built for Texas project. These partners curated data, delineated common sector practices, and crafted case studies to serve as tools to help those in and outside of the sector understand and explain the economic impact of each organization and the sector as a whole. The project included six case studies that highlight different nonprofit organizations across Texas. Click on the organization names below to view the case study.

- Unlocking Doors
- Digital Workforce Academy
- Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch
- Casa Marianella
- Just Do It Now
- Texas Agricultural Land Trust

Digital Workforce Academy’s Golden Triangle Empowerment Center is making economic impact by connecting individual work aspirations and industry needs in the oil and gas sector. For those with jobs prior to their free 10-week training, the average hourly wage was $11 per hour. The average hourly wage for people exiting training is $18 per hour. This is an increase of $14,560 annually and - for some individuals - it is the difference between government assistance and self-sufficiency.

Texas Nonprofit Profile: Digital Workforce Academy
With a focus on Social Equity, the 2019 Austin Futures report, based on the **Austin Area Sustainability Indicators** (A2SI) research initiative shares community survey data and trends across multiple dimensions of sustainability including health, education, civic engagement, housing, transportation, and public safety. Led by Dr. Patrick Bixler, the survey provides a rich longitudinal dataset for undergraduate and graduate research projects, in addition to fostering collaborations with nonprofit and public policy stakeholders. Click on the report image below to download the full report.

A2SI was recently selected for the **2020 Community Project Impact Award** from the Community Indicators Consortium, which recognizes "a project that is grounded in, and supported by, the community and use data to analyze, communicate community conditions, engage the public and policy makers to catalyze action for making measurable and sustainable improvements in quality of community life." Dr. Bixler will be recognized at the Virtual Impact Summit in August.

Although African American residents make up only 7.79% of residents in Travis County, they account for 28.51% of all arrestees in 2017. This represents a percentage uptick over the past three years (26.27% in 2014). Similar increasing percentages are being seen in Caldwell County and Bastrop County. Burnet, Hays, and Williamson are roughly the same.
National statistics show stagnant or declining attendance across many art forms associated with the nonprofit performing arts. While the problem is widely acknowledged, there is less consensus about how organizations can respond. Can data and market research help? A newly released report by Francie Ostrower, *Data and Deliberation: How Some Arts Organizations are Using Data to Understand Their Audiences*, addresses this question. The report offers interim findings from research on the experiences of 25 performing arts organizations in The Wallace Foundation’s Building Audiences for Sustainability initiative. RGK Center Senior Fellow Francie Ostrower, Professor at the LBJ School of Public Affairs and College of Fine Arts, is Principal Investigator of the multiyear evaluation of the initiative, commissioned and funded by The Wallace Foundation.

Dr. Ji Ma recently published his research paper titled *Funding nonprofits in a networked society: Toward a network framework of government support.* The paper explores the effects of government funding to nonprofits from a network perspective by analyzing a novel, 12-year panel dataset from the People's Republic of China. Dr. Ji Ma was also recently awarded the Academic Enrichment Fund Award from the University of Texas at Austin.
Q&A with Dr Aaron Rochlen: Mental Health Awareness Month

Read the full Q&A by clicking here.

In addition to teaching in the Department of Educational Psychology, RGK Center Faculty Fellow Dr. Aaron Rochlen is a mental health provider, researcher, and nonprofit founder. His research focuses on men and masculinity, with a particular emphasis on help-seeking patterns. Dr Rochlen's professional practice integrates nature and movement with opportunities for creative reflection, insight, and behavioral change. He also started the nonprofit Soccer Assist to make selective soccer opportunities available to more youth in the Austin community.

Alumni Highlight: E.A. Casey

Read the full highlight here.

A class of 2010 graduate from the LBJ School of Public Affairs, Casey took several courses through the RGK Center to earn their Nonprofit Studies certificate. Casey is now a Program Manager at AARP Foundation and an expert in healthy aging and social connectedness. In a recent conversation, they shared strategies they have implemented since the COVID-19 crisis began.
Course Offerings

Fall 2019

Affordable Housing Planning
Dynamics of Organizations and Communities
Government and Not-for-profit Accounting
Financing Innovation for Social Impact
Financial Management of Human Services
Gender, Health, and Society
Grantwriting and Resource Development
Historical Museums: Context and Practice
How Organizations Institutionalize Inequity and What We Can Do About It
Law: Entrepreneurship and Community Development
Leadership as a Catalyst for Community Change
Leadership in Human Service Systems
Linked Open Data
Management of Preservation Programs
Nonprofit Management of Human Services
Nonprofit Program Evaluation
Philanthropy: Historical and Contemporary Approaches
Reentry: Criminal Justice

Summer 2020

Perspectives on Philanthropy
Fundraising for Public/Nonprofit Organizations

Spring 2020

Advocacy
Building an Intergenerational Metropolis
Civil Society in Israel (Janmester)
Consulting for Social Impact
Data Management and Research Lifecycle
Investing in Philanthropy
Education Policy Implementation Seminar
Leadership as a Catalyst for Community Change
Leadership in Human Service Systems
Mobilizing the Community and Engaging Volunteers
Nonprofit Management and Strategy
Nonprofit Law
Nonprofit and Civil Society Sector
Social Entrepreneurship
Social Justice Philanthropy
Solutions for America’s Children in Poverty
Twelve UT students met in Jerusalem on January 2, 2020 for the launch of the RGK Center’s newest international course, led by Dr. David Eaton to study the role of the nonprofit sector in promoting "shared society" in Israel and Palestine. Offered in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania and Hebrew University, it was an intensive and immersive course experience for 35 students, providing an opportunity to learn firsthand from civil society leaders about their activities, management strategies, and competing narratives about the advancement of civil and human rights of different populations, with special emphasis on the Arab-Palestinian population in Israel.

"The ability to go to Jerusalem, to hear from individuals on all sides of the conflict, and (most importantly) to be able to see for ourselves firsthand is something that is absolutely crucial when addressing issues as complex as this one."

--Sahand Yazdanyar, MGPS ‘20