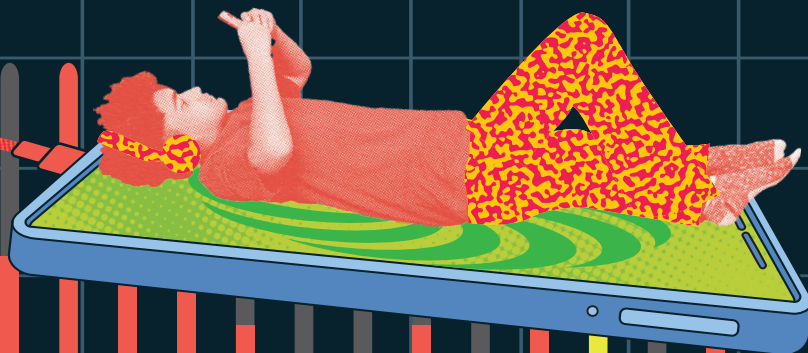
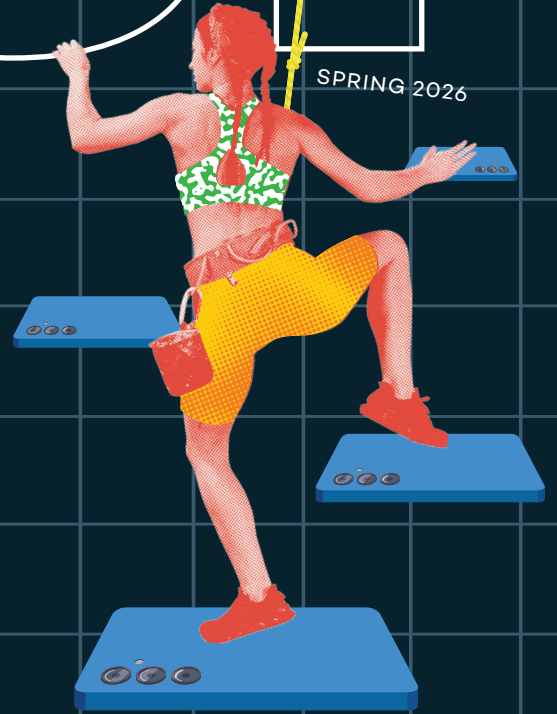


THE MAGAZINE OF LEARNING, LEADERSHIP, AND POLICY

S E E S E P

SPRING 2026



Digital Detoxing

A generation raised on screens is rethinking its relationship with them



SESP IN FOCUS

Maddie Zimmer (BS25), competing for Team USA, battles against New Zealand's field hockey team during January's Summer of Hockey Women's Tri-Series. A relentless and lethal threat on both sides of the ball, Zimmer helped propel Northwestern's field hockey team to its first Final Four in 26 years and three national titles, including back-to-back championships in 2024 and 2025.

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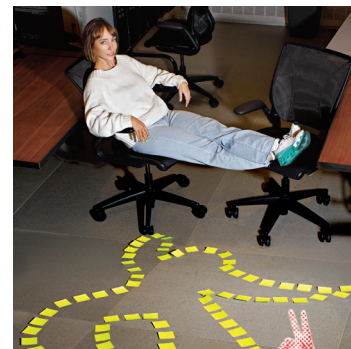


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Why alumna Sara Shacter talks to the "other side"

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Some SESP students are quitting social media on their own terms—with mixed results



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An organizational change expert rethinks the way we work



DEAR SESP COMMUNITY,

One of my favorite SESP traditions is Dine with the Dean. Several times each quarter, I gather with six to eight students at a local Evanston restaurant, where we deliberately order too much food (so they can take home leftovers), and we talk. Phones stay in bags. We listen; we ask questions; we share stories. I am guided by a singular question and goal: How can we make SESP better?

I always leave these evenings refreshed and wishing we had another hour. Or two. Our students are smart, driven, and genuinely interesting. And they are remarkably good at connecting—with one another and with me.

That capacity for connection is not incidental to what we do here. It is the point. SESP is fundamentally rooted in the relational aspects of learning. We are, in many ways, a school of emotional intelligence. We center students, we center people, and we center well-being. Decades of research confirm what we already believe: When students are happy, they thrive—in the classroom and beyond it. Our students are happy. They thrive.

I've heard people suggest that rigor should be measured by how much students struggle and how unhappy they are with the difficulty of their coursework. Or that the future belongs entirely to quantitative hard skills in math and science that can be measured or demonstrated.

I respectfully disagree. SESP has long understood that the ability to hold meaningful conversations, build relationships, and navigate complex human dynamics is more valuable in the workplace than technical skills alone. Calling these abilities "soft" has always struck me as misleading. Being human is not a liability. It is



something worth celebrating. And in practice, skills like communication and judgment are the future of the workplace and of a healthy planet.

During our Dine with the Dean events, I expect students to put their phones away. Genuine human connection doesn't need to be mediated by technology—and students know it. Asking questions, listening, and being part of face-to-face conversations build relationships in powerful ways. Part of that humanity means being deliberate about how we use technology. Learning to use our devices as tools, rather than being used by them, shapes how we see the world and how we show up in it.

I am proud of what we are building at SESP—proud of our students, our alumni, and our research and programming, like a recent conference on emotional well-being in a wired world. I'm also eager to see how our graduates help define what

comes next, because we're an aspirational school that sets a direction rather than a destination. We don't just work to get students across a finish line; we help them build the capacity, stamina, and courage to move toward something better.

That question—how can we make SESP better?—doesn't get answered just once. It gets answered dinner by dinner, and I keep listening. Because it's human connections, not technical skills, that make SESP distinctive and prepare students for the future.

Warmly,

Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy
Dean and Carlos Montezuma Professor
of Education and Social Policy

Learning and Leading Since 1926

This July the School of Education and Social Policy kicks off a celebration marking our 100th anniversary—a century of preparing leaders who shape people, schools, communities, and public systems. Founded in 1926 as the School of Education, SESP has evolved into an



interdisciplinary hub where scholars and students study how people learn and how policy can expand opportunity.

In 1986 we added social policy to our name because the challenges facing society demand leaders who understand both people and policy.

Today SESP is home to faculty experts in education, human development, learning sciences, social policy, higher education, and community-based

research. Our programs span undergraduate majors, professional master's degrees, and doctoral training, all grounded in a commitment to fairness and evidence-based practice.

This centennial belongs to all of us—including you! As the school we helped build is entering its second century, we want to celebrate. Whether you graduated last year or decades ago, your presence, your stories, and your continued investment in this community are what will make SESP's next hundred years possible.

Come celebrate. Reconnect. And help us write what comes next. Centennial events will include an **alumni lunch and dean's reception** (Friday, October 9) and two **Loeschner Leadership Lectures** (in fall and spring).

More details and events will be shared soon in email newsletters and at sesp.northwestern.edu.

Social Policy Up Close in Bronzeville

Students in a family policy course brought their studies to Chicago's South Side on a recent Saturday, touring Bronzeville to see how local and federal policies shape neighborhoods. Part of Professor **Lauren Tighe's** Child and Family Policy class, the trip included a stop at Parkway Gardens Apartment Homes, commonly known as O'Block, where Chicago historian Dilla explained how the complex—once one of the first cooperative housing developments in a historically redlined area—later

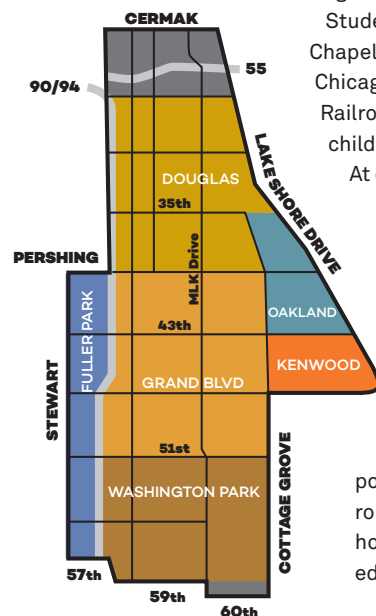
became known as one of the most dangerous blocks in Chicago.

Students also visited Quinn Chapel, the first Black church in Chicago and a key Underground Railroad site, and saw the childhood home of Emmett Till.

At each stop, Dilla connected local history to social policy.

Tighe has organized the trip for two years with support from the Division of Student Affairs.

Her course begins with a close look at poverty; students explore the role of cash, food, healthcare, housing assistance, and education policy in daily life.



Yahtzee + Legos = Math

Avid readers think nothing of unwinding with a good book. But what if math inspired the same kind of joy? Associate professor of learning sciences **Jen Munson** is working to make that idea a reality. With a new five-year National Science Foundation CAREER grant of over \$800,000, she will design playful, hands-on after-school environments that invite children to experience math as something creative, social, and deeply engaging.

In partnership with Evanston/Skokie School District 65, Munson will create programs at two elementary schools and build a professional learning community for teachers. The goal is to help students see themselves as mathematicians beyond the classroom and to equip teachers to nurture and sustain that identity.

"We want to redefine math so all students feel they belong and so it's joyful enough to do by choice," Munson says. In the US, math is often viewed as mechanical and joyless, and classrooms frequently reward speed and accuracy, leaving many students anxious and disengaged.

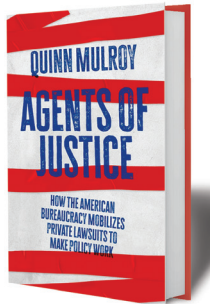


She argues that math should be creative, social, and exploratory—more like playing Yahtzee, building with Legos, or solving puzzles. A former elementary and middle school teacher and founder of Multiplicity Lab, a math resource hub for elementary and middle school classrooms, Munson studies how beliefs about math shape instruction. "If students and teachers see math as creative and collaborative," she says, "that changes everything."



The Hidden Forces of Policy Work

Professor **Quinn Mulroy's** first book offers a fresh take on how American civil rights and environmental laws actually get enforced and who deserves credit for doing so. In *Agents of Justice: How the American Bureaucracy Mobilizes Private Lawsuits to Make Policy Work*, she argues that the government officials who built and sustained the modern litigation state have been largely written out of history.



Her book focuses on the civil rights and environmental agencies created in the 1960s that were formally limited in their power. Rather than giving up, officials at those agencies, which she calls "agents of justice," developed creative workarounds—mobilizing private citizens to bring lawsuits on behalf of the agencies.

The research behind the book received the Leonard D. White Best

Dissertation Award from the American Political Science Association. Mulroy also received Northwestern's 2024 Ver Steeg Award, honoring a faculty member for excellence in working with graduate students.



"We Can't Look the Other Way"

Professor **Uri Wilensky** (left) received the 2025 Yidan Prize for Education Research at the Yidan Prize Awards in Hong Kong, sharing his vision for making computational thinking more accessible.

"Today's problems are complex—climate change, global conflict, global markets," he said. "We can't just sit tight and hope for the best. We can't look the other way. We must empower ourselves to embrace the complexity of these times."

The Yidan Prize Summit convenes more than 500 educators and leaders from over 50 countries. Established in 2016, the prize is the world's largest education award, providing \$3.8 million to support and scale the winning work.

Wilensky, the Lorraine H. Morton Professor of Learning Sciences and Computer Science, is a pioneer in computer modeling and simulations. In 1999 he created NetLogo, a free platform to build models showing how individual actions produce large-scale patterns. Students and researchers worldwide use the tool to explore such topics as climate change, pandemics, and economic instability.

"Democracy is a verb. It is not a noun. We must exercise it, make it vibrant, and continue to keep it as part of our story. The bedrock American values we've had for 250 years—the freedom to give, the freedom to invest the way we want to—those are under attack. We have to push back."

—John Palfrey, president of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, during SESP's 2025 Loeschner Leadership Lecture



The Teaching Actually Does Matter

Reimagining how science is taught—and who belongs



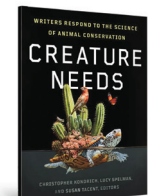
Tzou with learning sciences doctoral candidate Miguel Angel Ovies-Bocanegra

Carrie Tzou (PhD08) had always been into school and science, but when she struggled for the first time in college, she went to her adviser and asked why the teaching wasn't better. His answer was surprisingly honest.

"He said that in college, 'the teaching doesn't matter—just your research,'" Tzou recalls. "That was my aha moment. It helped me understand the power of teaching." Tzou left the conversation with a new mission. She wanted to be both a researcher and a teacher who could help students connect classroom learning to their lives.

Book recommendation: *Creature Needs: Writers Respond to the Science of Animal Conservation*. "It's a fascinating collection in which poets and writers respond to primary scientific texts—like research abstracts—

with poetry or short stories. It shifts the focus from something like population loss to individuals, families, mothers, and children. It really makes you think about how we talk about science."



"We often emphasize how to teach, but not why we teach in certain ways based on what we know about learning."

—Carrie Tzou

After graduating from Stanford University, she spent two years teaching middle school science in the Bay Area. She earned a master's degree from Vanderbilt University, then came to Northwestern in 2000 to pursue her doctorate in learning sciences. Now, more than two decades later, she has returned to SESP as a professor of learning sciences and associate dean. Her research examines how place, community, and social context shape the way people experience science—and who gets to feel like they belong in the science field.

"My own science education never addressed science's ties to power, historical oppression, or the promise of just futures," she says. "The work I'm doing now lets us design for those connections."

At SESP, Tzou reunited with Megan Bang, the James Johnson Professor of Learning Sciences, whom she had met as a fellow doctoral student. Their work has produced two National Science Foundation grants—a \$1.8 million award to better prepare elementary school educators to teach STEM topics, and a grant supporting Learning in Places, a project that builds pre-K through fifth grade hands-on science curricula.

For the past 15 years, Tzou has also worked to bring learning sciences—the interdisciplinary study of how people learn—into teacher preparation.

"We often emphasize how to teach, but not why we teach in certain ways based on what we know about learning," she says. "Reconnecting with theories of human learning explains both what we do and why we do it."

Reflecting on her own early teaching, Tzou says she would approach it differently now: "I'd be more intentional about balancing an appreciation for how science helps us explore the natural world with a critical awareness of how it's often narrowly defined in schools."

Before coming to SESP, Tzou was professor of science education in the School of Educational Studies at the University of Washington Bothell and director of the Goodlad Institute for Educational Renewal. A national leader in her field, she has served on two committees of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's science education board.

Beyond the classroom, Tzou will play a key role in SESP's Office of Community Partnerships, working closely with Evanston/Skokie School District 65 as it confronts budget deficits and school closures. The work, Tzou says, depends on humility and long-term relationships.

"We don't know everything," she says. "If we see ourselves as separate from the natural world or from each other, we miss the systems of support that allow us to thrive."



Megan Bang



Cynthia Coburn



Eva Lam



Susan Corwith



Gail Ann Berger Darlow



Mesmin Destin



Paul Goren



Kirabo Jackson



Jolie Matthews



Doug Medin



Sepehr Vakil



Michelle Yin

IN BRIEF

Faculty members **Megan Bang** and **Cynthia Coburn** and professor emerita **Carol Lee** wrote the Spencer Foundation report *Enhancing the Preparation of Research for Transformative Research in Education*, calling for a new approach to graduate education.

Research by graduate student **Gautam Bisht** and professor **Eva Lam** suggests that students who write in multiple languages can challenge English-centered norms in education and highlight often overlooked ways of learning.

Dean **Bryan Brayboy** delivered the American Educational Research Association Distinguished Lecture at the organization's annual meeting in April.

Susan Corwith, director of the Center for Talent Development, was elected to the National Association for Gifted Children board of directors and is a US delegate to the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children.

Former instructor **Gail Ann Berger Darlow** died in December. An inspiring and generous teacher, she taught for 15 years in the undergraduate Learning and Organizational Change program, advised on master's capstone projects, and developed courses; her honors include the Associated Student Government Faculty Honor Roll and SESP's outstanding instructor award.

Professor **Mesmin Destin** was named a Carnegie Foundation senior fellow to help define the skills students need to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

Paul Goren, executive director of the Northwestern Collaborative for Applied Research in Education, was named board chair of the New Teachers Center, a nonprofit focused on sustaining the teacher workforce.

Professor **Claudia Haase** received the Karl Rosengren Faculty Mentoring Award for the second consecutive year, recognizing her work with Allison Kim, recipient of this year's Fletcher Undergraduate Research Prize.

Professors **Kirabo Jackson** and **Terri Sabol** spoke at the annual meeting of the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness, where professor **Zenzile Reddick** participated in a panel. A working paper by Jackson and doctoral student **Julia Turner** showed that universal pre-K can deliver substantial economic benefits.

A research note coauthored by Professor **Sneha Kumar** suggests that, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, women who already had children wanted slightly more children as community deaths rose.

Professor **Jolie Matthews** coauthored the young readers edition of *Trailblazers: The Unmatched Story of Women's Tennis* with tennis legend Billie Jean King and Alexandra Badiu. The book features inspiring illustrated biographies of pioneering women in the sport.

Professor emeritus **Doug Medin** received the David E. Rumelhart Prize, the most important award in the field of cognitive science.

Professor **Sally Nuamah** moderated two conversations on the intersection of creativity and equality as part of the World Women Davos Agenda, which took place alongside the World Economic Forum.

Professor emerita **Paula Olszewski-Kubilius**, former director of the Center for Talent Development, received the Ann F. Isaacs Founder's Memorial Award from the National Association for Gifted Children.

Professor **Sepehr Vakil** delivered the keynote presentation "The Future of Education in an Age of AI" at the Institute for the Future of Education's annual conference. He also participated in a panel discussion on whether AI can truly change schools. Northwestern received a \$25,000 grant from the Field Foundation to help support the second season of Vakil's podcast, *A Professor and a Comedian Walk into a Bar*.

Professor **Michelle Yin** was elected to the National Academy of Social Insurance, the nation's leading nonpartisan organization focused on Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and disability policy.

SESP received a three-year, \$2.6 million grant from the Baxter Foundation to continue work with the Baxter Center for Science Education initiative that supports STEM educators and classrooms.

Kris Yun: Training Students in Cybersecurity

A leadership model built to last

By Alina Dizik

When **Kris Yun** launched Northwestern's first student-led cybersecurity club in 2024, her biggest fear was that no one would show up. But when she arrived to the first meeting, the room was packed. For the first-year social policy and computer science student, it was a clear sign she was on the right track.

Today the club has evolved into the startup Locket Cybersecurity, which certifies undergraduates to provide free security audits to small businesses, hosts workshops and discussions, and maintains an online safety information hub. Since Locket was founded, 30 students have completed the quarter-long Google Cybersecurity certification and three small businesses have received audits. Students uncover a variety of vulnerabilities, from low-level technical issues (don't reuse your password!) to poor organizational security practices.

But Yun didn't just found a startup. She was a two-time director of Wildhacks, the University's annual hackathon, during which students build software projects over 24 hours, and she's twice attended the Black Hat series of global cybersecurity conferences. She also served as a computer science peer mentor. "I love sharing the joy of learning," she says.

The daughter of two educators, Yun grew up in Northbrook, Illinois, and went to schools that emphasized digital privacy and literacy. "We had lessons about our digital footprint, catfishing, and cyberbullying," she says. When her grandparents, who owned a laundromat, began receiving threats in the mail, she started to think about how to help small businesses stay safe—online and off.

"Kris has a rare combination of intellectual curiosity, discipline, and moral seriousness," says Camille Stewart Gloster, founder of the CAS Strategies cybersecurity



"Kris has a rare combination of intellectual curiosity, discipline, and moral seriousness. In our field, those qualities matter more than raw technical skills."

—Camille Stewart Gloster

advisory firm. "In our field, those qualities matter more than raw technical skills."

Yun completed an internship with Stewart Gloster, who was deputy national cyber director in the Biden administration, and has continued to work with her as an undergraduate. She also worked as a software analyst with Shostack + Associates, helping improve the company's internal tools.

The idea for Locket grew from McCormick professor Sruti Bhagavatula's Security and Privacy Education class. Classmate Theo Maurino approached Yun with the idea of creating a cyber clinic; they later shifted the organization's focus to security audits and certification for small businesses.

The audits themselves take about 10 weeks. Students discuss "worst nightmare" scenarios with clients and interview

tech support, human resources, and other team members to get more information about workflows and security. Locket then outlines vulnerabilities and recommends mitigation strategies.

"A client may have multiple employees who have equal access to sensitive materials across the organization," Yun says. Locket recommends the principle of least privilege, so that employees have what's necessary to complete their work without excessive access capabilities. Students also provide tips to help organizations stay aware of social engineering and spoofing attacks.

Yun, who is also pursuing a concentration in security and privacy in the McCormick School of Engineering, chose Northwestern for SESP's interdisciplinary approach and the ability to pursue a second major in another school. She's especially interested in policy that affects vulnerable communities and critical public infrastructure.

Yun believes tech policy is increasingly important, because the most pressing social issues of the moment—housing, healthcare, labor, civil rights—now have a digital layer that traditional policy thinking wasn't built to handle. "When people think of policy, they think of social issues or the environment, but as tech is evolving, we need to bring that technical angle into the social policy arena."

And while she remains more invested than ever in Locket's mission to give students the technical skills to help small and medium businesses remain digitally safe, Yun has come full circle: She is onboarding the next class of student leaders to ensure Locket Cybersecurity continues long after she graduates.

"It's important to know when you should take a step back," she says. "It's time to let other people dream, ideate, and see what the future will look like."

FIGHTING TO CONNECT

Why Sara Shacter believes talking across differences matters

By Julie Deardorff



After the 2016 presidential election, **Sara Shacter** (MS90) felt a strong need to get out of her blue bubble. Could so many people really have a different set of values than she did? When she learned a friend's husband leaned conservative and loved talking politics, she invited him out for brunch.

A decade later, Shacter—an educator, writer, and children's book author—still regularly meets up with Jerry Patt, a retired math teacher. They debate immigration, gun rights, and climate change, but one thing they agree on is that their conversations are crucial for a healthy democracy.

"Sara is a remarkable individual," Patt says. "We couldn't be more diametrically opposed politically, but she's very thoughtful and we never argue—we just discuss things. If other people got together like we do, there wouldn't be so much political polarization."

A bridge between blue and red

Connecting with others, especially those with different perspectives, is at the heart of Shacter's work, whether she's volunteering for an organization trying to bring civil discourse back into American politics or writing children's books with themes of belonging. Everyone can help bridge our country's divides, she says, not necessarily by reshaping opinions on issues but by changing how we see one another. The key is to remember that the call to "fight hard" can obscure the necessity to "fight soft." We must work to understand the reasons behind disagreements. "That's how you find overlap," she says. "And in some cases, it's the only way to move forward."

Shortly after reaching out to Patt in 2016, Shacter discovered the Illinois chapter of Braver Angels, which facilitates structured conversations, workshops, debates, and public presentations between liberals (called "blues") and conservatives ("reds"). As a volunteer, Shacter has been



(Left) Sara Shacter, second from right, at the Listening Across the Aisles event that brought together blue-leaning Braver Angels and members of the Chicago Young Republicans.

instrumental in arranging events and reaching out to reds so there is a balance of viewpoints, says Chicago's Maryanne Colter, the blue-state coordinator for Illinois.

Shacter is also working on a program to bring the Braver Angels approach to nonmembers, an idea piloted last September with the Chicago Young Republicans. A group of blue Braver Angels attended the Young Republicans meeting for what was supposed to be an hour of conversation. Instead, it lasted three hours, Colter says, and twice as many Young Republicans showed up than expected—surprising, since Turning Point founder Charlie Kirk had been assassinated the day before.

"They passed up attending candlelight vigils to come talk to us," Colter says. "By the end, we found things to agree on—including the value of education—and it never would have happened without Sara being diligent and determined and saying, 'We're going to do this.'"

"She believes in face-to-face conversations and reaching across the aisle, even if she vehemently disagrees."

—Maryanne Colter

Shacter was also part of the Braver Angels team that worked on an initiative to send red Angels to the 2024 Democratic National Convention in Chicago and blues

to the Republican convention in Milwaukee. In common ground workshops, which bring together equal numbers of conservatives and liberals for a deep dive into issues like climate change, electoral reform, or abortion, Shacter is the one who can bring the temperature down. "She believes in face-to-face conversations and reaching across the aisle, even if she vehemently disagrees," Colter says. "What she does doesn't capture it. It's *who* she is."

More alike than we think

Shacter knew she wanted to be a teacher and writer from a young age. An avid reader—she devoured Judy Blume's books—she also loved to write and penned a letter to the editor in eighth grade. After studying English and psychology at Tufts University, she spent a year as a teacher's aide at Waukegan (Illinois) East High School before earning her master's at SESP. She then taught high school English for a decade in Park Ridge, Illinois, while also working on children's books, inspired by a class she took after college.

Her debut middle-grade novel, *Georgia Watson and the 99 Percent Campaign*, teaches that most unkindness comes from other people's unhappiness, exploring the importance of connection that parallels her work with Braver Angels. The book can be used as a springboard for both reading and social-emotional learning instruction, Shacter says. "Georgia feels alone and believes her nemesis is simply a nasty person. But when she starts to look at the *why* behind her own loneliness and the *why* behind her nemesis's attitude, she begins to see that there's another story."

While working on the book and researching heredity, she fell in love with the idea that we're all more than 99 percent the same in terms of our genetic material. "We're unbelievably similar on such a deep level," she says,



"and that's important to remember, especially now." Shacter has returned to the classroom through author visits, discussing with students such topics as genetics and heredity, the power of human connection, and the importance of believing in yourself.

In addition to her continued meetings with Patt, she likes to strike up conversations with anyone who seems to hold an opinion at odds with her own. She's learned that what seems ignorant or mean-spirited on either side is often rooted in the fact that we're simply not hearing the same things from media sources. She's also found that she and Patt often disagree for the same reason. "We might argue about immigration policy, but because we both want things to be fair. We might disagree about gun control, but because we both want people to feel safe. I started to see that when you get down to the *why* regarding someone's beliefs, the context of the story shifts."

People in her bubble will often tell Shacter, "You talk to *them*? I just couldn't do it." Her response? "If you decide to try, I bet it won't be what you think. Connection is key if we are to solve the pressing issues in our world."

Citizenship Is a Skill

SESP's newly revamped Civic Engagement Certificate program teaches students how to build personal relationships to revive civic health and promote democratic change.

Civic engagement is more than voting or volunteering. At SESP, students learn that it also requires developing social skills that can help build personal relationships.

"Civic engagement, political polarization, and inequality go up and down together," says Professor Matt Easterday, a learning scientist who recently led a yearslong effort to revamp the program. "Teaching students how to walk up to and talk to strangers, ask for ballot signatures, and host or attend events like potlucks plays a large role in reviving civic health and promoting democratic change."

Also known as relational organizing, the practice of mobilizing friends and family to act relies on building social networks. Organizing a gathering, Easterday says, "gives people a chance to talk about issues that are important to all of us, like civics." But while early exposure to civics education is essential to a functioning society, it is often taught too late or not at all. "Part of the reason people take elections so hard is because they don't feel like they have any power over the process. Knowing how to navigate the system doesn't just happen. People have to be taught how to be competent citizens."

First-year students in the certificate program learn how to conduct one-on-one interviews with people about the issues they care about and invite them to get involved. They also run a student organization that leads community-building efforts and participatory budgeting campaigns. At events such

as Civic Saturdays, people come together to share a meal and discuss a public issue, and at Civic StorySlams, participants tell five-minute personal accounts about their own community involvement.

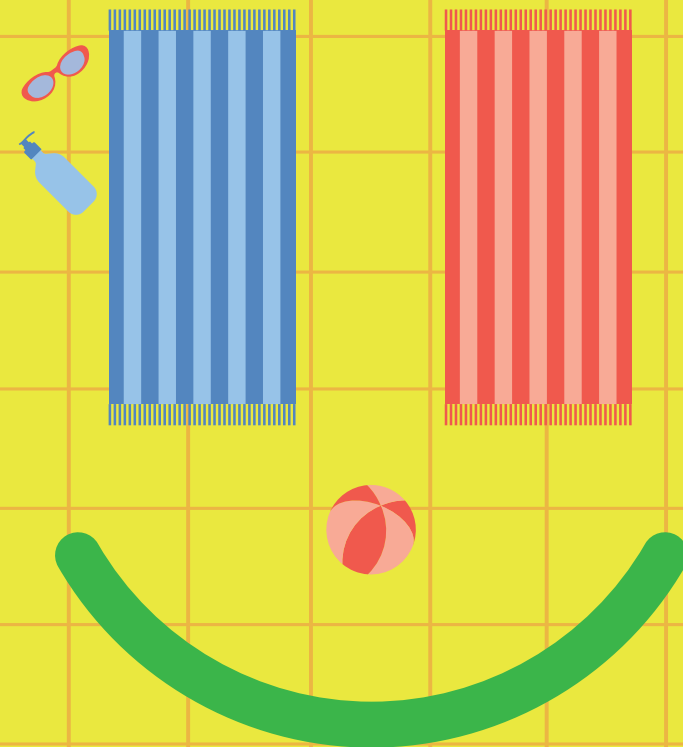
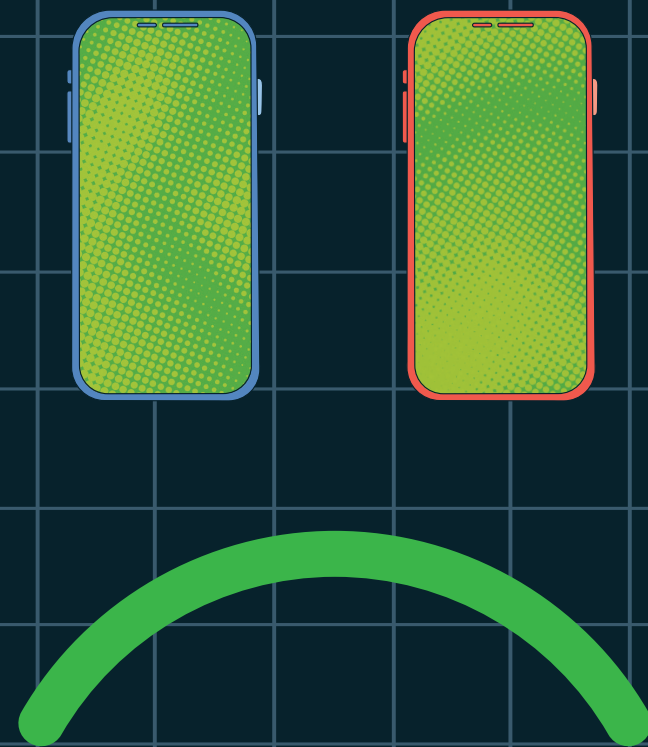
In the second year, students take leadership roles on the executive board of Open Democracy Northwestern, an undergraduate club. They develop strategy, train members, and manage day-to-day operations while receiving weekly coaching from instructors.

"We want students to understand they are part of the community and responsible for it," Easterday says, "and that with the right democratic structures, we can govern ourselves."

Easterday's Ways to Improve Civic Engagement

1. **Join** a local organization focused on building people power.
2. **Attend** a political action training on writing postcards, text banking, or canvassing.
3. **Participate** in local government by attending a city council or ward meeting, speaking with your council member, or applying to serve on a board.
4. **Ask friends and neighbors** to join you for a civic potluck.
5. **Read up** on making your civic engagement more effective: *Open Democracy* (Landmore), *People, Power, Change* (Ganz), and *Practical Radicals* (Bhargava and Luce).





The Anxious Generation Tries LOGGING OFF

By Julie Deardorff

Amid growing signals that using smartphones and social media is bad for mental health, some SESP students, alumni, and faculty are seeing the upside of taking a break.

When Andrew Onema has exams coming up or an important project due, he'll post a story on Instagram letting people know he's taking a little break from social media. But he inevitably searches for the app whenever he picks up his phone, forgetting he's deleted it.

"You don't realize how much of a habit it is until it's gone," says Onema, 20, a first-year SESP student whose longest social media pause has lasted a month. "But whenever I really need to focus or feel like my brain is beginning to rot, I know it's time."

As governments, schools, parents, and now courts wrestle with the addictive nature of social media, a growing number of Gen Zers are stepping back on their own. Labeled the "anxious generation" by social psychologist and author Jonathan Haidt, they cycle on and off apps like Instagram and TikTok—or quit altogether—often in response to an unsettling feeling that the



constant connection comes at a mental health cost.

Supporters of digital detoxes say even short breaks can reduce stress, improve mood and sleep, and help people notice unhealthy tech habits. But the benefits are often temporary, and pausing can make people feel isolated, especially those who rely

on social media to stay connected. Detoxes don't work the same way for everyone and may postpone addressing deeper issues related to mental health.

Moreover, a detox puts the burden on the user instead of on the company that designed the technology, says Charles Logan (PhD25), a postdoctoral fellow at SESP's Center for Responsible Technology, Policy, and Public Dialogue. "A detox means it's up to you to manage your relationship with the technology, rather than asking why the technologies were ever released in the first place," says Logan, who teaches a class on the design of learning environments.

The science is still catching up

Researchers are still working to pin down exactly how, and how much, social media affects well-being. Past studies have often contradicted one another, partly because they rely too much on teens' and young adults' estimating their own screen time. Practitioners, however, say they routinely see negative effects on mental health, especially self-esteem. "It makes people feel like losers when they don't have plans every single weekend," says therapist Scott Gerson (BS17), who was known for using a flip phone as an undergraduate. "It's sad, since social media was originally meant to connect people. It seems like the effect today is quite the opposite."

A recent study in *JAMA Network Open* used data from participants' phones to track behavior and mood in real time, which researchers said provided a more complete picture. Young adults between ages 18 and 24 used social media on their phones regularly for two weeks followed by a week of abstinence. They reported declines in depressive symptoms, anxiety, and insomnia, which suggests that even a short social media break can be temporarily helpful.

Smartphones, social media, and artificial intelligence are accelerating the pace of emotional life, often in ways our brains and bodies are not built to handle, says stress researcher and professor Emma Adam. "Our systems are designed for small-to-

medium waves of experience," she says. "Prolonged high levels of stress can alter stress hormones and related biological systems in ways that affect sleep and health." What's important is that we help young people "surf" life's waves by reducing stressors, strengthening social supports, and designing technologies that align with human well-being.

"It's not that social media and phone use are bad, per se—in fact there can be benefits," says Michal Boyars (BS12), a licensed psychologist in Maryland. "The problem is that they amplify existing challenges, so someone prone to anxiety becomes much more anxious when they spend time scrolling."

There's a huge opportunity cost too, Boyars says. When she began checking screen time and app use during neuropsychology assessments, she was stunned to see that "some teens were spending five to seven hours a day on their phones—mostly on addictive apps, like TikTok, which are designed to give our brains a surge of rewarding neurotransmitters like dopamine." Her patients are surprised to see how the time adds up. "They are often motivated, driven, wonderful kids who feel like there's never enough time in the day, and this is partially why. Scrolling has become a full-time job, and that means a real loss of growth opportunities, like having a real job, hanging out with friends in person, or learning to cook. And they're less prepared for adult life."

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"It's sad, since social media was originally meant to connect people. It seems like the effect today is quite the opposite."

—Scott Gerson

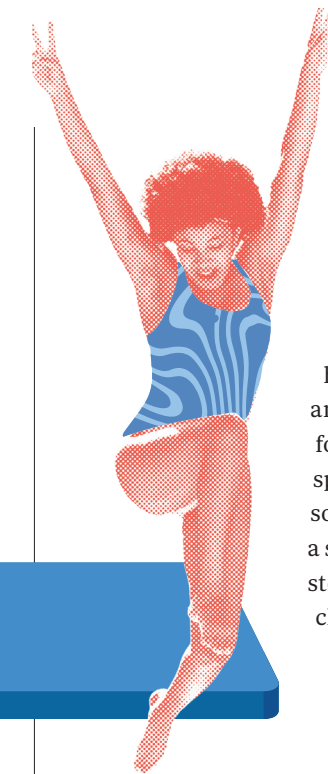
Goodbye, Instagram?

SESP senior Grace Lee noticed that she's sensitive to external stimulation; after she deactivated Instagram for good, her anxiety level decreased. She's been completely off social media for a year, and her boyfriend—whose job involves creating social media content—also deactivated his personal accounts. With her focus back, she can now read a book, watch an entire movie, or sit in a two-hour lecture without checking her phone or computer. "I can look out a window and be entertained," she says.

Lee cautions that disappearing from social media "takes a whole other level of not caring about what's going on socially." She misses out on different trends or events—like a thriving pop-up—unless her friends tell her about them. She also doesn't know what other people are doing.

But for her, that's a positive. "It's become a comfort not having to know what I'm missing out on," says Lee, who hopes to become a therapist and work with children and families. "It gave me the freedom to just do what I want."

Growing up in Oklahoma City, first-year Onema got his first phone in eighth grade, later than many of his friends. He



joined Instagram at age 16 and now mostly uses social media to keep up with people. At Northwestern, he says, it adds another layer of competition: Who you follow—and whether a professor follows you back—can feel like a measure of status. He has seen how the apps affect his attention span and study habits, making it harder to focus or even watch videos at normal speed. He tries to take breaks, but as social media manager for Griffin's Tale, a student-led organization that adapts stories by Evanston elementary school children into songs and sketches, he has to stay online.

After one Griffin's Tale meeting, a friend wondered what they would do for fun without phones. The conversation turned to when they might give them to their own children, all feeling they'd gotten theirs too early.

"We agreed that the end of high school" was the right time, Onema says. But he knows that's easier said than done without universal buy-in or better tools to help people build healthier relationships with technology. "It has to be a community mindset. No one wants to be the one kid without a phone."



Five ways SESP is reducing social media use

Delay gratification

Senior Liam Hubbard won't check his phone until after his first class, which can end as late as 11 a.m. If he wants to see something specific—like Bears highlights on Instagram—he downloads the app, watches, then deletes it. "If I'm in a waiting room, a class, or a line, I try not to use my phone," Hubbard says. "I let myself be bored, just to have space to think."

The Pomodoro technique

Senior Sanad Alshubbak manages screen time with the Pomodoro technique: 25 minutes of studying followed by 5 minutes on his phone. He tries to be intentional about his phone use rather than just doomscrolling. He attempted a three-day detox his first quarter of college but found that the most effective breaks happen when he's busy—visiting friends at another school, for example. "Then I don't touch my phone the entire day."

Leave the country

Sophomore Aneela Shemsu reduced her screen time to two hours a day while visiting family in Ethiopia over winter break by skipping an international SIM card. Saying a full detox is hard to sustain, she may try limiting specific apps instead. "I do love my phone," she says. "But I had more time to read and catch up on films."

Join a tech-free study group

Economics professor Scott Ogawa tested a simple approach: Give students credit, similar to that for completing a homework question, for working for an hour in a space without phones or laptops. Students were "surprisingly OK with it," he says. "They weren't trying to use their phones for answers or even just random texting. It's basically an old-fashioned study hall."

Get a flip phone

Professor Sepehr Vakil, codirector of the Center for Responsible Technology, Policy, and Public Dialogue, switched to a flip phone after hearing comedian Aziz Ansari discuss his own screen habits. "It was about freeing up my headspace to be more present with my kids and think more deeply about my research," he says. The transition hasn't been seamless—during a recent trip to Mexico to speak at an artificial intelligence conference, he brought his smartphone, supposedly for directions. When last spotted, he was carrying two. "It's been difficult," he says. "But hold me to it. I'm going to eventually leave my house without my smartphone and use it on an as-needed basis." Stay tuned.

Research That TRAVELS

University support gives undergraduate researchers the confidence to explore complex global issues



Undergraduate Juniper Shelley once thought the “cool” research only happened in cold, windowless STEM labs.

But after joining Professor Sally Nuamah’s research team, she realized it could involve nearly everything she loves: traveling, talking to people, and exploring challenging questions.

Shelley, a SESP junior, will take that work global this summer after winning Northwestern University’s highly competitive \$10,000 Circumnavigators Travel-Study Grant. Her project involves traveling to Mexico, South Africa, Sweden, Japan, and Australia over 10 weeks to study how men in different cultures experience loneliness, masculinity, and emotional connection. It’s a dream adventure for Shelley, though she isn’t necessarily planning a career in research.

“If you have a wide range of interests, undergraduate research is a fantastic way

to pursue academic passions without having to take classes or declare a major,” she says. “Research doesn’t need to look like working in a lab on campus.”

Shelley is one of countless SESP undergraduates who came to Northwestern with little understanding of what research entails and are now enthusiastic advocates. Through course-based research, senior honors theses, University grants, and faculty labs, students gain experience working alongside world-class scholars while building skills, confidence, and professional networks that last long after graduation. Students say research pushes them beyond their comfort zones, teaching them to navigate uncertainty, adapt when plans change, and take responsibility for complex projects.

“In the beginning, it is totally overwhelming, but it gets better and you settle in,” says Jonathon McBride (BS16), a 2015 Circumnavigators Grant recipient who is now an anesthesiology resident at the University of Michigan. “At each site, I got better at asking questions, I got better at researching, and I certainly got better

at traveling.” He studied sexual assault policies and student support resources at universities in Brazil, Spain, the Netherlands, Turkey, South Africa, and Australia for a project that grew out of his work as president of Northwestern Men Against Rape and Sexual Assault.

“The Circumnavigators Grant really changed how I think and approach everything,” says McBride, who plans to specialize in pediatric anesthesiology and was recently awarded a clinical fellowship at Stanford University. “It’s not just about research—getting through challenges while traveling solo gives you tremendous confidence that you can handle whatever life throws at you.”

Curiosity across continents

Shelley, of Montclair, New Jersey, first began in Nuamah’s lab studying how Black girls are disciplined in Chicago Public Schools. She also completed an independent research project examining how immigration status affects interactions with the healthcare system. She began thinking about the emotional lives of men after seeing social media posts about the

male loneliness epidemic and reading *Boys and Sex* by Peggy Orenstein. “The scale of the problem really struck me,” she says. “There weren’t many solutions.”

As she prepared her Circumnavigators proposal, Shelley sent more than 100 emails and spoke with at least 20 members of the ManKind Project, an international nonprofit that facilitates men’s groups in more than two dozen countries. Houssine, from Belgium, told her about turning to drugs instead of confronting his failing marriage. Fernando, from Mexico, admitted he never learned to identify emotions beyond anger. Rob, from Japan, recalled how isolation led to suicidal thoughts in high school.

“Support from the Circumnavigators Grant lets me learn from people all over the world and understand how their unique experiences help answer very complex questions.”

—Juniper Shelley

Shelley quickly noticed that men from countries with vastly different cultures of masculinity described similar feelings of isolation. “Hearing how deeply these patterns affected men’s mental health made me want to understand not only the problem, but what kinds of community-based solutions actually help,” she says.

For her project “Rewriting Manhood: Cross-Cultural Approaches to Male Connection and Growth,” Shelley will interview group leaders in each country she travels to and collect observational, survey, interview, and focus-group data. Talking to people is her favorite part of the research process and a skill she expects to use wherever she lands.

Conversations across cultures

“I like the type of research that relies on other people’s expertise to answer challenging questions,” Shelley says. “Support from the Circumnavigators Grant lets me learn from people all over the world and understand how their unique experiences help answer very complex questions.”

Shelley hopes to pursue a career in international aid after graduate school, where research will follow her for years to come. For those who want to pursue research as undergraduates, she suggests starting with a big idea and being “open-minded to changing your approach as you go.”

“This project is certainly not what I imagined I would be working on when I began researching the topic,” she adds. “But the conversations I had with members of the ManKind Project were some of the most engaging I’ve ever had. I’m excited to talk to them in their own countries and to see firsthand how, where, and why the program works.”

Where scholars get started

At Northwestern, the first stop on the research journey is generally the Office of Undergraduate Research, which provides advice, funding, and resources to hundreds of students each year. In addition to the highly competitive Circumnavigators Grant, the office offers many other opportunities, including a \$1,000 grant for academic-year research expenses and a \$4,000 summer grant to pay living expenses during an independent academic or creative project.

Over the past decade, SESP students have consistently secured strong research funding, and the school is often overrepresented relative to its size, says **Megan Novak Wood** (right), associate director of undergraduate research. Students excel not only in earning grants but in sharing their work, from poster prizes and conference travel grants to standout performances at Northwestern’s Undergraduate Research and Arts Expo.



SESP is also a strong pipeline for the Emerging Scholars Program, particularly via the SESP Leadership Institute, an intensive, quarter-long academic program that supports students who identify as first-generation or lower-income. Emerging Scholars, which also focuses on underrepresented students, provides 15 months of funding for a wide range of research or creative arts projects.

As an Emerging Scholar, junior **Valentina Parra** (below) worked as a research assistant with Weinberg professor Alyssa Garcia on a study published in the journal of the Afro-Latin/American Research Association. She then secured a second summer of funding and completed an independent research project on how people talked about race, identity, and politics on social media during Mexico’s 2024 presidential election.



“I was initially scared about the time commitment, but looking back, I honestly wish I could have done it all four years,” says Parra, who is studying learning sciences. “I never would have thought research was for me if it weren’t for this program. The relationships I formed with my mentors, my cohort, other offices on campus, and my professors are simply incomparable.”

Today she’s one of SESP’s biggest advocates for undergraduate research. “So many of my friends told me they wish they’d known about it sooner,” she says.



Dan Galante



Amanda Brimmer



Julie Kornfeld



Camille Cooley



Tricia Catalino



Courtney Syskowski



Jane Merrill



Helena Kalman



Tara Haas



Ray Mitic



Gillian Feldmeth



Jamilah Silver



Michael Ve



Quinton Sprull



Jason Patrick-Smith



Rosalie Shyu

80s

Dan Galante (MSED87) was named head football coach at Lawrence University.

90s

Teressa Alexander (BS94) is an obstetrician and gynecologist at Illinois's OSF Health-Care Saint Katharine Medical Center.

Tricia Catalino (BS94, FSM96) is president of the Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy through 2029. She is dean of the Graduate College of Health Sciences at Hawai'i Pacific University.

Kwei Akuete (BS95) is a senior document validation specialist supporting disaster recovery efforts for the US government.

Tara Haas (BS95) is chief of staff at Semrush Holdings, a software company that helps businesses improve their online visibility.

Debi Brooks (MS97) was appointed cochair of the Emerging Technology Advisory Board focused on biotechnology by New York governor Kathy Hochul. She is cofounder and CEO of the Michael J. Fox Foundation.

00s

Kathleen Snow (BS00) teaches at the Washington Alternative Learning Center in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Donna Ioffredo (BS01) was promoted to partner at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison.

Michael Ve (BS01) is a design partner at Transcend, where he works with communities to transform schools from an industrial model of education to 21st-century learner-centered systems. He earned his doctorate in education leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Amanda Brimmer (BS02, Kellogg07) is CFO, leasing advisory, and head of corporate development for commercial real estate and investment management company JLL. She is also a director for the Easterseals Serving Chicagoland and Greater Rockford.

Martine Wells (BS03), a shareholder with global law firm Greenberg Traurig, was named to 5280 magazine's 2026 list of the top attorneys in Denver.

Gia DiGiacobbe (BS05) is director of curriculum design and implementation for the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine.

Courtney Syskowski (MS08) is the academic program development manager in the provost's office at the University of Pittsburgh.

Ray Mitic (MS09) is assistant professor of higher education at the College of William & Mary, where he teaches in the master's and doctoral programs.

Quinton Sprull (BS09) is chief of staff at AnitaB.org, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing women and undervalued communities in technology worldwide. With president and CEO Brenda Darden Wilkerson (McCormick85), he guides such initiatives as the annual Grace Hopper Celebration focused on tech inclusion and leadership.

10s

Julie Kornfeld (BS11) is chief operating officer for Building Tomorrow, an organization focused on community-powered learning in Sub-Saharan Africa. A human rights advocate for the past decade, she codirected the Northwestern University Conference on Human Rights, the largest human rights conference run and attended by undergraduates in the country. She earned her law degree from the University of Michigan.

Jane Merrill (BS12) is director of trial court litigation and senior appellate counsel at the Center for Appellate Litigation in New York City.

Emily Roskey (BS12) is a licensed social worker and therapist in Seattle, specializing in adolescence and young adulthood. She also offers ecotherapy and Reiki healing.

Joan DeGennaro (BS13) is director of community and events for Scale Venture Partners in San Francisco and cofounded the Platform Team. Previously, she spent five years at Y Combinator, where she worked on a startup school and led a nonprofit focused on sanitation access in rural India.

Gillian Feldmeth (BS13) is senior manager of policy and innovation at Cook County Health's CountyCare.

Adriana Stanovici (BS13) is director of global relations for the YMCA of the USA, where she strengthens global partnerships, intercultural learning, and community engagement.

Robert Barnes (BS15) is assistant professor of anesthesiology at the Feinberg School of Medicine.

Jennifer Katz (BS15) is an associate at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. She focuses on the intersection of law and technology, including issues related to artificial intelligence, data privacy, and security.

Anisa Mian (BS15) is chief of staff at Koda Health. She was previously senior manager of strategic initiatives for Rock Health.

Jason Patrick-Smith (BS15) is an education manager for the Walt Disney Company. He has worked in environmental education for a decade and is especially passionate about fostering connections between people and nature.

Spencer Carlson (BS16, PhD21) is a senior researcher at Netflix.

Garrett Goehring (BS17) is senior product marketing manager at restaurant management software company Toast. He previously developed and operated a ghost kitchen concept as the founder of G Squared.

Sloan Middleton Mann (BS17, Kellogg25) recently earned her MBA and founded the Business of Vintage to help resale businesses compete with retail.

Camille Cooley (BS18) and Scott Renshaw (McCormick18) were married in June 2025. Cooley leads policy and county engagement at Kaiser Permanente Medi-Cal for the Bay Area.

Franklin Gaglione (MS19) is executive director at the Marlene and Spencer Hays Foundation.

Helena Kalman (BS19) is manager for reimbursement strategy, payment, and policy for MCRA, which helps companies develop and get approval for medical products. She's also a certified professional medical billing coder.

Carson Rogge (BS19) is a resident pediatric physician at Texas Children's Hospital. She wants to use her background in neuroscience and learning sciences to integrate educational tools into developmental pediatrics.

Jamilah Silver (BS19) is assistant professor in the psychology and neuroscience department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Founding director of the Developmental Research in Irritability and Psychopathology Lab, she has won numerous awards, including the Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology Researcher Award and the Clinical Science Student Training Award.

20s

Jared Zvonar (BS20) is development manager for Leeward Renewable Energy.

Wayland Lum (MS21) was appointed managing director of FMG Leading, a consulting firm that helps healthcare companies develop their leaders and workforce to improve how healthcare is delivered.

Sloane Barry (BS22) appeared on *Shark Tank* to pitch Somnia+, a bed expander kit design to make dorm beds more functional and comfortable. Barry and partner Brennan Hellmers secured a deal with investor Barbara Corcoran for \$100,000 in exchange for a 17.5 percent stake. Barry works in marketing for i3 Verticals.

Mike Bearden (BS22), a former offensive assistant for the Cleveland Browns, was named coaching fellow and offensive assistant for the Atlanta Falcons.

Rosalie Shyu (MS22), a Knowles Teaching Fellow and former mechanical engineer, is a secondary math teacher and department chair with Chicago Public Schools. An avid runner, she also coaches boys' cross-country and track and field.

Michael Spikes (PhD23) was elected to the Illinois Press Foundation board of directors. He is a lecturer and director of the Teach for Chicago Journalism program at Medill.

Ispita K (BS24), senior associate for strategic operations for APS & Associates, was named to the Publicity Club of Chicago's 30 Under 30 class of 2025.



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Are We Having Fun Yet?

Finding joy on the job



They call it *work* for a reason: It's drudgery, something to slog through until payday. But maybe you love your job—work is your passion, your identity, and nearly all you do.

Bree Groff (MS14) offers a third way to think about how we spend five-sevenths of our week: What if work were simply more fun? In her new book, *Today Was Fun: A Book About Work (Seriously)*, she argues that life is too short to spend the week pining for Friday: “We deserve to love all our days. Even Mondays. Because one day we will run out.”

Groff earned her master's degree in learning and organizational change from SESP and credits the program with shaping her human-centered approach to work. But she says her book's real backbone comes from her parents. Early lessons included hearing her mother come home from teaching kindergarten saying, “I have the best days,” and watching her father laugh and joke with colleagues like old friends. Later lessons were harder won. Caring for her mother during terminal cancer profoundly changed Groff's relationship to her own days, while caring for her father, who has Alzheimer's disease, keeps those lessons alive.

In *Today Was Fun*, Groff, a senior adviser at global consulting firm SY Partners and a public speaker, challenges the idea that

“We deserve to love all our days. Even Mondays. Because one day we will run out.”

— Bree Groff

professionalism requires being buttoned-up and overworked. Her seven rules for better days on the job include reminders that our brains work whether we're wearing stretchy pants or a suit and that “mostly good days” are enough.

“I'm a firm believer that any job can be fun with the right people,” she says.

Before joining SY Partners, Groff was CEO of NOBL, a consultancy focused on new ways of working. She has partnered with executives on everything from company vision and culture to employee experience at Pfizer, Microsoft, Calvin Klein, Hilton, Atlassian, Target, and Google, among others. After double majoring in biology and psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, she moved to Los Angeles, where she pursued acting and taught middle and high school math and physics—experiences that also appear in the book.

Blending personal stories with research and humor, Groff offers practical exercises for improving team dynamics and creating workplaces where people feel human and alive.

The book, which she considered for five years before writing it in six months, was named a best indie book of 2025 by *Kirkus Reviews*.

Groff recently joined a virtual book talk with SESP's Master's in Learning and Organizational Change program to discuss favorite concepts. Here are three approaches Groff recommends for building better workplace relationships—the foundation for having more fun.

A “Manual of Me”

Help others understand how to work with you at your best by spelling out the basics like who matters most in your life and what you need when you're stressed or stuck (space, conversation, or something else). Instead of making people guess or projecting expectations, simply let them know how you work. Groff says the “manual” has a 100 percent success rate. Getting to know one another faster builds empathy and increases the chances that team members will understand—and like—one another.

Finger shoots

Groff begins meetings by asking everyone how they're doing on a scale of one to five. Participants show their number with their fingers, then take about 30 seconds to explain why. A five might mean a birthday weekend; a two might mean a bad back and a camera turned off. In just five minutes, judgment gives way to empathy. People feel seen, conversations soften, and teams build real camaraderie.

Micro mischief

Add lightness and surprise to the workday. Try ordering umbrella picks for coffee or tea, expensed as “team building,” and pass them out at a meeting. Or start a Where's Waldo-style game by hiding an object in plain sight. For something a little more controversial, schedule a Friday meeting with a serious title—then cancel it on arrival and give everyone the hour back to enjoy their lives.



Amy Rosenthal

A public health leader for three decades, Rosenthal (BS94) is undersecretary of health for Massachusetts Health and Human Services.

I was pretty involved on campus.

I ran Homecoming my junior year and was cochair of Dance Marathon as a senior. I probably spent more time on activities than classes.

The Council of 100, a group of Northwestern alumnae who mentor female students, was founded while I was an undergrad. At the very first meeting, I was so busy organizing the event that I forgot to save myself a seat. I ended up sitting in the corner next to Marilyn Moats Kennedy (Medill65, MS66), who turned out to be a career strategist and the job strategies editor at *Glamour*.

Marilyn taught me about the importance of having mentors in my life, and she remained an important influence throughout my early career.

My SESP experiences were foundational. I wanted to do policy work but didn't know how to begin. Northwestern gave me important opportunities that propelled my career, starting with my SESP practicum at Voices for Illinois Children.

The director there later helped me get an internship at the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, DC.

Never underestimate the importance of these formative experiences. They led to other opportunities in policy work, building my skills and my résumé.

For two decades, I worked as a consumer healthcare advocate and ensured people's needs were represented when healthcare decisions were being made. A career highlight was helping draft, pass, implement, and defend the Affordable Care Act.

I'd leave my house at 5 a.m. on Tuesday and fly to Washington for meetings at the White House in the morning, be on the Hill or at Health and Human Services in the afternoon, and be home to put the kids to bed.

In 2017 I became the executive director of Health Care for All in Massachusetts, the first state-level consumer health advocacy organization in the country. The state's leaders believe in shared

responsibility. We rank first in the country for health insurance coverage.

Our political system works best when we are willing to work together, listen to one another, and compromise to make change.

I remain optimistic. The governor knows we need to work on making healthcare more affordable. We want Massachusetts to once again lead the way by addressing one of the most challenging issues facing families and businesses across the country.

We need young people to go into advocacy and public health more than ever, especially as healthcare programs are being cut and science is questioned.

I wake up at the crack of dawn to walk with friends, many of whom also work in healthcare and have big jobs. It's a little release for each of us. Connecting with other moms grounds me.

AS TOLD TO JULIE DEARDORFF

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FAREWELL, ANNENBERG

In September, SESP will move into the newly renovated Education and Social Sciences building (the former Jacobs Center), marking the start of our next century of learning, leadership, and innovation. While we've had several homes since our founding in 1926, Annenberg Hall is where SESP evolved into a research-oriented, interdisciplinary institution with a stellar national reputation. As we celebrate our centennial this year, please **share your favorite Annenberg memories** with us.

