



Sociology of Disasters

Research Committee on the Sociology of Disasters

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

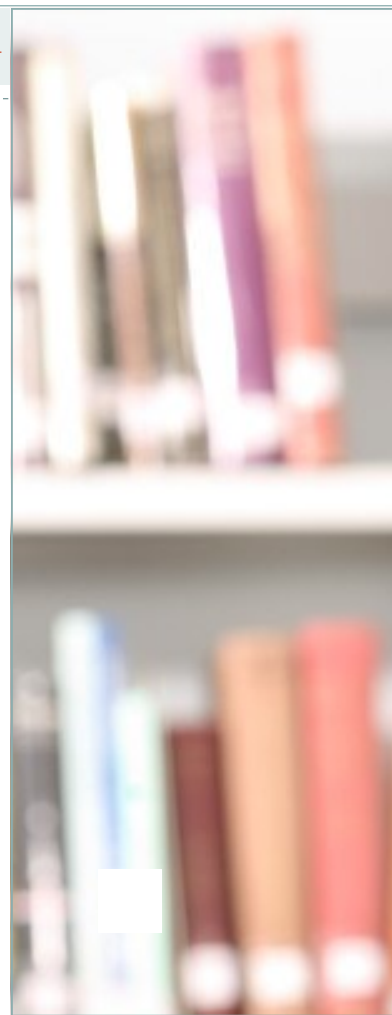
Hello amazing colleagues! Welcome to this issue of *Unscheduled Events*. As always, we have all sorts of news and information for you to read about in this issue. Before that, I want to acknowledge that we are in times of great political, social, and environmental change. My heartfelt thanks, admiration, and support goes out to all of those working in difficult conditions, facing/making difficult choices, and dealing with trauma at any level. At the same time, we must



Michele Companion

take moments to celebrate the joys that come into our lives. It is my great, GREAT pleasure to say “Tshekó:ni!” (“welcome” in Kanien’kéha, which is the language of the Mohawk people). I am so honored to welcome several little peanuts to the world and to our disaster family! Congrats to the new families and welcome little ones!

All sorts of events have been occurring since our last newsletter. The Natural Hazard Workshop and Researcher’s Meeting were held in July. There were amazing sessions, presentations, posters, and social events. Deeper in the newsletter, you will find some fun and some more formal pictures. I am always so excited to attend the sessions, and I tried to talk to everyone who had posters. I come away so amazed and inspired by the incredible work people are doing. I also really love meeting all the energetic students who have incredible insights and do wonderful work. As a quick reminder, next year is the **50th anniversary** of the Natural Hazard Workshop. Wow! Make your plans now and register and book your hotel early. You can find information at: <https://hazards.colorado.edu/workshop/2025>. I will be providing additional information on the Workshop and the Researcher’s Meeting in our Spring/Fall 2025 newsletter.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE


- President’s Note 1
- 5th World Forum3
- Natural Hazards Workshop and Researcher’s Meeting5
- Great News14
- Donations/Legacy Giving.....15

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT *continued...*

In other news, the program for the International Sociological Association's 5th World Forum of Sociology is really coming together! We had a number of amazing abstracts submitted and have filled all of our sessions. Thanks to the amazing Marlon Era (Research Committee 39 program co-coordinator), Tristan Wu (RC-39 secretary), and Rosie Lin (social media coordinator) for getting the word out, and to all of YOU for suggesting incredible sessions and submitting wonderful abstracts. I am excited for Rabat! For more information on timelines for registration and general information, please refer to the content that follows in this newsletter.

I am looking forward to seeing you and learning more about your work. Please stay safe and well!

With tremendous respect,

Michèle Companion 

The 5th World Forum

Marlon Era and I are so grateful for the amazing response we have had from our incredible colleagues. In addition to our business meeting, we are hosting SIXTEEN sessions, chaired by colleagues from around the world. We are also co-hosting an additional three sessions. Please note that if you submitted to one of these co-hosted sessions, Marlon and I have no say in how those are scheduled or which papers are accepted. This is prerogative of the section that is hosting the session. These sessions provide an incredible opportunity to showcase the amazing work our colleagues around the world are doing. Each session has at least seven abstracts that have been accepted. You will be really pleased by the range of papers and contributors!

As a reminder, registration begins **December 5th** for this on-site, in person conference. There will be no remote options. **YOU MUST register by March 22, 2025**, which includes paying the registration fee. If you do not, you will be dropped from the program. I urge those with distributed papers to also register. Often, due to life circumstances or funding issues, people must withdraw. Anyone with a distributed paper will be moved into an open oral presentation slot if they are registered. There is usually a registration grant process that can help. However, I don't have information from ISA regarding that yet. As soon as I get it, Marlon and I will reach out to you with the particulars.

For those who are not presenting, please do consider coming. These conferences are an amazing opportunity to connect with colleagues! Below, please find the list of our sessions. We look forward to seeing you in Rabat!

الرباط
RABAT

ISA
International
Sociological
Association

V ISA Forum of Sociology
6-11 July, 2025

#ISAforum25 #Morocco

RC-39 Sessions:

1. Polycrisis — Bridging or Deepening the Divide between the Global North and the Global South: Global Conflicts, Food Insecurity and Innovative Food/Agricultural Technologies
2. How Nongovernment Organizations Affect Justice and Equity in Climate Disasters: New Directions in Theory and Practice
3. The Affective Turn in the Sociology of Disasters
4. Women Practitioners in Emergencies
5. Disasters Studies in the Global South
6. Cultural Heritage and Disaster
7. Displacement, Migration, and Relocation
8. Understanding and Mitigating Urban Disasters
9. Adapting Disaster Response Strategies to Unique Environmental Challenges
10. Community Engagement in Disaster Recovery: Bridging Research Perspectives
11. Digital Sociology of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
12. Disasters, Resistance and Change: The Politics of Disaster Risk Creation
13. Issues in Disaster Studies I
14. Women's and Children's Health and Wellbeing Following Disaster: Toward a Human-Right-Based Recovery Framework
15. Threats, Challenges, and Opportunities to Livelihoods
16. Unequal Impacts: Disaster Vulnerability and Resilience in the Anthropocene



See you in Rabat!

The Natural Hazard Workshop and Researchers Meeting

The Natural Hazard Center at the University of Colorado Boulder held its annual workshop (number 49!) from July 14 – July 17, with the Researchers meeting following from July 17 – 18. You can explore the program, read abstracts, and get links to the award-winning papers at the following link: <https://hazards.colorado.edu/workshop/2024>.

This year's theme was "The Stories We Tell: Creative Strategies for Understanding and Communicating Disaster Risk." The keynote speaker helped to really highlight the importance of perspectives and oral histories and traditional ecological and Indigenous knowledge systems in tracking, understanding, contextualizing, preparing for, and mitigating disaster impacts and engaging in disaster risk reduction strategies. James Rattling Leaf, Rosebud Sioux and principal of the Wolakota Lab, LLC., advocated for greater inclusion of Indigenous practices and perspectives in policy and practices by providing examples of disaster risk management, environmental stewardship, and community solidarity that resulted from collaborative projects that integrated Indigenous knowledge systems. His keynote presentation set the tone for the sessions that followed (including mine – Thanks James!) by demonstrating that combining Indigenous storytelling with modern scientific knowledge can create a path for holistic approaches to build resilience.



James Rattling Leaf. Picture courtesy of Van Zandt Visuals

BAF 10TH ANNIVERSARY

The workshop also hosted a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Bill Anderson Fund. I am fortunate in my life to have stumbled into an incredible group of mentors for whom I am eternally grateful. Among them, I am so proud to count Bill as a mentor and friend. In fact, you all can blame Bill for me being where I am today... feel free to laugh or roll your eyes... At an event in the ago times, Bill was singly responsible for chewing me out oh so politely in his Bill way when I informed him that I was abandoning my Ph.D. program and returning to Africa. Bill rather pointedly reminded me that voices from a wider range of communities were critical for the advancement of disaster studies and to ensure inclusion of all communities in policy discussions. He informed me that I could be better situated to go back to disaster work overseas and make an impact WITH a Ph.D. He was kind enough, patient enough, and wise enough to point out that the experiences I was having in graduate school were precisely why I needed to stay, finish, and mentor those coming after me. I am forever thankful that I had the momentary smarts to heed his advice and will always be so honored to be the recipient of his wisdom and patience.



Bill Anderson



Norma Anderson. Photo courtesy of Van Zandt Visual

Bill's loss was devastating. And yet, Norma Anderson refused to crumble. She founded and became President of the William Averette Anderson Fund. Norma turned her amazing (and boundless!) energy into continuing the mission to expand the number of historically underrepresented professionals in the fields of hazards and disaster research and practice. If you attend the Natural Hazard Workshop, the annual 5k Disaster Dash helps to support BAF fellows. If you've been to the NHW, the Researchers Meeting, International Sociological Association

World Forums and World Congresses, and other U.S. national global events, chances are, you have met a BAF Fellow. They are doing amazing work!

In fact, you are reading this newsletter thanks to a BAF Fellow. Thank you Tiffany Cousins (newsletter editor)!



Happy 10th anniversary BAF! If you would like to learn more about the Bill Anderson Fund, please visit their website at <https://billandersonfund.org>



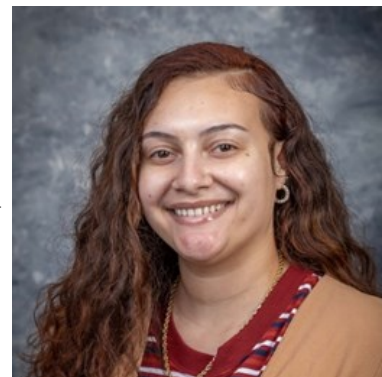
AWARDS

The celebrations continued with the 2024 awards ceremony. The Disability and Disasters Award supports people with disabilities working in disasters, as well as those who care for, study, or advocate on behalf of those with disabilities. There were two recipients this year. The first is:



Elizabeth Davis, an emergency management consultant focusing on inclusive emergency management, marginalized population planning, disaster human services, and related issues through her firm EAD & Associates, LLC, which employs a holistic, client-focused approach to providing quality services and real-world solutions.

The second is **Annika Doneghy**, a dual degree student at Case Western Reserve University. She is working towards a PhD in medical anthropology and an MPH concentrated in health policy and management. Her research reconceptualizes disability and recovery to consider wide-ranging human ability and diversity in disaster contexts, showing that many people with disabilities and other health conditions have different definitions and perspectives of recovery when compared to governmental and non-governmental organizations.

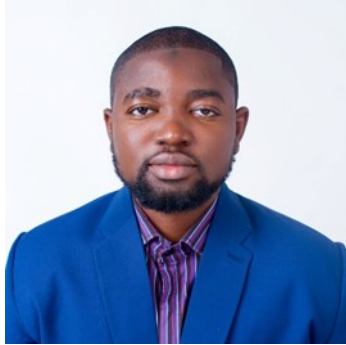


The Undergraduate Student Paper award winner is **Gabriella Bellows**, a May 2024 graduate of Tulane University with a Bachelor of Arts in homeland security and a minor in political science, for the work entitled, “After the Earthquake: Institutional Trust and Governmental Performance in Chile and Haiti.”

The Graduate Student Paper award winner is **Gardiner Brown**, a doctoral student in the University of California, Berkeley’s Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management, for his work entitled, “Vulnerable Populations/ Responsible Individuals: Disability and Hurricane Harvey.”



Finally, we have the amazing Mary Fran Myers Scholarship Winner. The Mary Fran Myers Scholarship recognizes outstanding individuals who share Myers' commitment to disaster research and practice and have the potential to make a lasting contribution to reducing disaster vulnerability. The 2024 winner is:

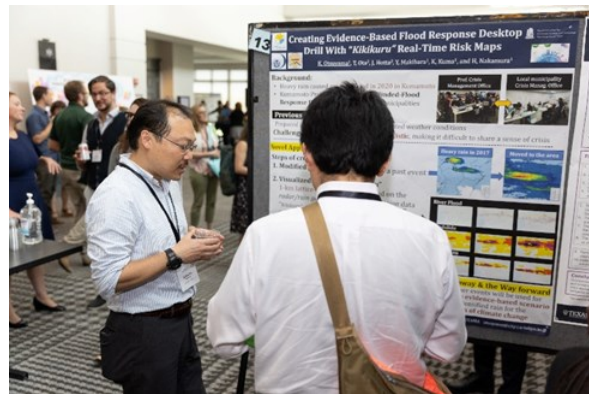


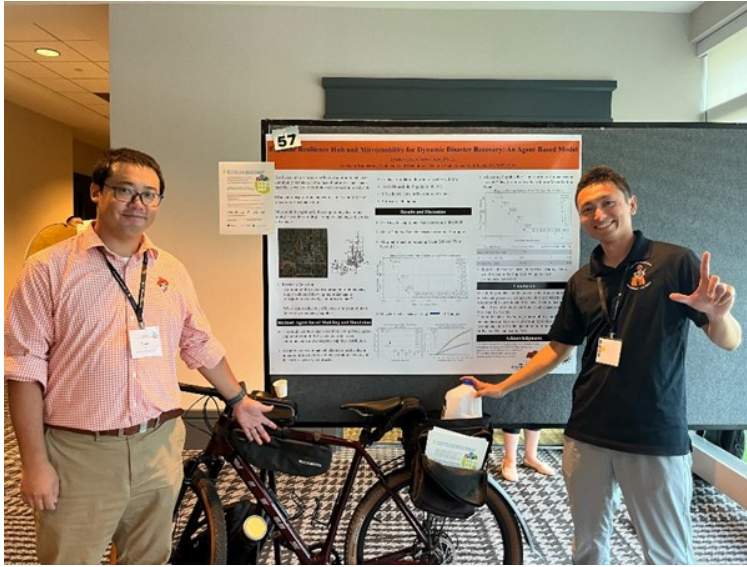
Olasunkanmi Habeeb Okunola, a Visiting Scientist at the United Nations University-Institute for Environment and Human Security in Bonn, Germany. Olasunkanmi holds a doctorate in Urban and Regional Planning from Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria. His doctoral research focused on effective strategies for disaster risk reduction and their implementation in urban areas. Currently, his research focuses on understanding the recovery pathways and resilient rebuilding processes of communities affected by extreme climate events in Germany and Nigeria.

CONGRATULATIONS to the amazing winners!

MOMENTS OF NOTE

For those that have never attended the Natural Hazard Workshop or Researchers Meeting, they are wonderful experiences! You get to connect with colleagues who have traveled from near and very far, like our incredible colleagues from Japan.



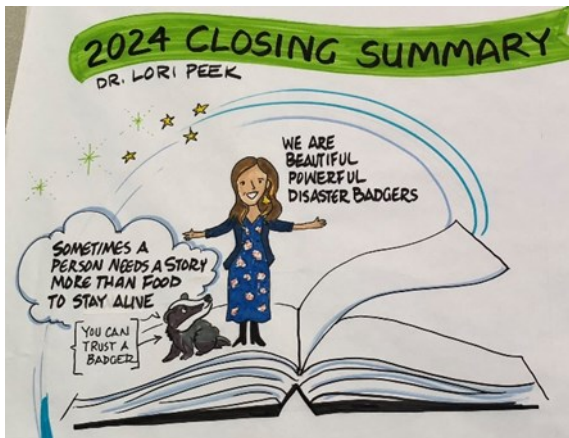


The poster sessions are always wonderful! Every year, I try to speak with each presenter to learn about what they are doing. I am always so humbled by the incredible work our colleagues are doing and so inspired after sessions and poster sessions.

Please remember that next July 2025 is the **50th Anniversary** of the Natural Hazard Workshop! There will be amazing things happening to celebrate, so please do consider attending. If you are planning on attending, however, please do plan ahead and register early and **BOOK THAT HOTEL**. The 2024 conference was the largest to date. They are anticipating very strong attendance for 2025 as well, so watch your emails for updates on registration.

The NHW closed with some final thoughts from director Lori Peek. You can find the full comments at the following: <https://hazards.colorado.edu/news/director/the-stories-we-tell-closing-comments-from-the-2024-natural-hazards-workshop>

Lori reminded us that in some cultures, the badger is considered one of the most powerful guardians in the universe. Badgers are fierce and tenacious, and they can be counted on in the most difficult of situations to display boldness and perseverance. She notes that, “I sometimes feel like I’m looking out at a room full of beautiful, powerful disaster badgers.” She used a traditional teaching of the crow and weasel learning from the wise badger to weave together the themes from the Workshop of storytelling.



She notes, “Our keynote speaker James Rattling-Leaf emphasized that the environmental and social changes affecting our communities are so profound—so disruptive—that stories are the key to helping people unlock an understanding of these changes and get prepared for them.

Stories are also important because they are what give us context. They give context to and humanize the data that researchers in our community collect. They give context to the information that practitioners are working so hard to share with people and communities. As Erica Ledesma of the Coalición Fortaleza said, “The importance of stories is they propel us to take action.”

Stories matter. And research has shown that it is important that we—as people who hold expertise in this field—tell our own stories, when appropriate, to help connect with the different audiences we serve. But I think an even more important lesson of this year’s Workshop centered on the importance of listening to other people’s stories.”

For those of you who do not know, Lori goes to every single session, even if just for a few minutes at a time. Every. Single. Session. We owe her and the entire workshop team a debt of thanks for the amount of work that goes into this incredible event each year. Jolie Breedan, thanks for all your years of incredible service to the Natural Hazard Center! We will miss you!

THE RESEARCHERS MEETING

The Researchers Meeting always immediately follows the Natural Hazard Workshop. The Researchers Meeting is organized by the International Sociological Association Research Committee on Disasters (ISA-RC39) with the support of the Natural Hazards Center and the Natural Hazards Engineering Research Infrastructure (NHERI) CONVERGE facility at the University of Colorado Boulder. I am so grateful to Lori Peek for her opening remarks.



I tried to follow Lori’s incredible lead and attend every session. In some time frames, there were seven concurrent sessions, so I am very sorry if I dashed by you or missed your paper. I tried! It truly was a privilege to learn about the work our community is doing. The quality and intensity of the discussions during and after sessions was really inspiring. Again, this is an incredible opportunity to connect with scholars from all over the globe. I look forward to seeing more of you next year! You can find our program at the following link: <https://hazards.colorado.edu/uploads/documents/2024-rm-program-web-version.pdf>

A LITTLE LEVITY

Because we all need some humor and smiles these days, here are some touches of levity for you. For long-term attendees, you know that there cannot be a gathering of over 700 disaster specialists without the fire alarm going off at the Omni Interlocken... complete with building evacuation. Hey, at least this year the alarm went off in the warm, clear afternoon instead of two in the morning. Or in the rain. Of course, there is something to be said for the tremendous bonding that occurs when you see your most respected mentors in a parking lot at 2 am in their cartoon character pajamas. Just saying... This seems to be an almost annual tradition and a good reminder to pack those nicer pajamas without the holes in them...



Literally one more moment of levity: in truth, I have no idea what the context was for this picture and neither does Lori, but thanks to Van Zandt Visuals for capturing this most professional moment...



In all seriousness, we need disaster specialists now more than ever. Our world is changing in a variety of ways. We need to share insights and hear each other's stories, whether that be in formal sessions or informal contexts. Please consider sharing your work and bringing your students to share their insights and research and to experience beneficial networking opportunities at the next Natural Hazard Workshop and the 2025 Researchers Meeting.

Team Disaster Badgers needs YOU!



Great News

Congratulations to our amazing colleagues!

Andrea Lampis was awarded the [Critical Pathways Autumn Fellowship](#) by the Critical Pathways research group at Utrecht University. He will be visiting Utrecht (November-December, presenting his work on the Reparation Ecology Approach, based on his 2022 co-authored paper on Reparation Ecology published by *Frontiers in Climate*).



Russell Dippy was conferred the Doctor of Public Safety on 4 October, 2024 from Charles Sturt University in Australia. His thesis, supervised by our own incredible Val Ingham and Dr Ann Lazarsfeld-Jensen, is entitled “**The Australian Emergency Manager: A Journey towards Professionalisation.**” In brief, the work is an “examination of 20 years of Australian emergency events, coupled with interviews of eight emergency event inquiry authors has led to the development of new definitions for the Australian Emergency Manager, Response Manager and Recovery

Manager. Further the ‘Emergency Management Disciplinary Spectrum’ was developed in conjunction with the ‘Emergency Management T-Shaped Transdisciplinary Model.’” You can read a more detailed abstract of Russell’s work at the following link: <https://researchoutput.csu.edu.au/en/publications/the-australian-emergency-manager-a-journey-towards-professionalis>. Russel also presented a poster on the outcomes of his research at the Australian Fire and Emergency Services Conference (AFAC).

Donations & Legacy Giving

The International Research Committee on Disasters is a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization. This was the original name for ISA's Research Committee 39 – Sociology of Disasters. The charitable organization uses this name. Tax-deductible donations can be made to IRCD to help us support students and members from Category B and C Countries (See the following link for ISA's Table of Economies by Category: [Table of Economies by Category \(isa-sociology.org\)](http://isa-sociology.org)). We can apply donations to support both member and student registration and travel grants to ISA/RC-39 World Forums and World Congresses. We have (funding permitting) the T. Joseph Scanlon Student Travel Award, which is given to a student attending the ISA World Congress who demonstrates exceptional talent to provide financial support for participation. To donate, please reach out to our Secretary/Treasurer Tristan Wu at ircdsecretary@gmail.com for more details on donations or providing for IRCD in your will or trust.



Joe Scanlon (1933 – 2015)

For more information about our research committee, please visit <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/research-networks/research-committees/rc39-sociology-of-disasters/>

Information about the V ISA World Forum can be found here: [V ISA Forum of Sociology \(isa-sociology.org\)](http://www.isa-sociology.org)



Sociology
Of Disasters

ISA RC39
P.O. Box 130422
Dallas, TX
75313, USA

E-mail: ircdsecretary@gmail.com
[International Journal of Mass
Emergencies & Disasters: Sage Journals
\(sagepub.com\)](#)

Follow us on **X/Twitter**: [ISA RC39](#)

Follow us on **Facebook**: [ISA RC39](#)

Follow us on **Instagram**: [ISA RC39](#)

Social Media: isarc39disasters@gmail.com

