

THE FUTURE IS FEMALE (AND URBAN)

Conversations with CUGS women who will lead us into an increasingly urban and global future.



FEATURING

SALIMA ETOKA '15

NOOR MALIK '18

**NA FU, LUCE VISITING
SCHOLAR 2015-2016**

**EMILY CUMMINS, KELTER
POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW
2016-2018**

**JULIE GAMBLE,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
OF URBAN STUDIES**

**BY HANNAH WARD '20 &
GABBY NELSON**

Over the past year, Trinity has celebrated "Women at the Summit," in honor of 50 years of coeducation at the college. Culminating with a celebratory event in February honoring 50 for the next 50: fifty women who will lead Trinity into the next fifty years, the year-long commemoration was an opportunity for the Trinity community to recognize the women who bring their talents to our college and continue on to make us proud.

In conversation with this celebration, we at CUGS wanted to take this chance to recognize a handful of the exemplary women who have worked with us over our 13 years on campus. We talked with them about their time at CUGS, their accomplishments, their mentors, and advice for current students.

Responses have been edited for length and clarity.



SALIMA ETOKA '15

**Truman Scholar and Graduate Student,
Kennedy School of Government,
Harvard University**

HOW DID YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH CUGS CONNECT WITH YOUR EXPERIENCES AFTER GRADUATING?

There was a direct connection between being interested in cities from taking classes at CUGS with Dean Chen and Garth, doing research to understand these topics in the African context, and coming back to the U.S. and working at an internship in city government in New York City after graduating. Now in grad school, I am looking through a comparative lens at how we work with people to be able to live in cities with the risks that climate change will bring.

CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE TRUMAN SCHOLAR PROGRAM AND ANY ADVICE YOU HAVE FOR STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THE PROGRAM?

The Truman Foundation scholarship is awarded to juniors who have demonstrated an interest and a commitment to public service. It provides funding for graduate school and a community of people interested in public service.

After my experience with the Truman scholarship, I would like to encourage more Trinity students to apply for this scholarship. Other students at Trinity are qualified and could benefit from being a part of this program.

The New York City Urban Fellows program is another program I would encourage Trinity students to apply to. It is super competitive, and you apply in your senior year. It places young grads in city government. This was my first job after undergrad and I was exposed to so much around how you run cities and how decisions are made on the city level, including meeting commissioners and asking them questions. It would be a wonderful opportunity for students who are interested in urban studies, but don't know what a career in the field looks like.

INVOLVEMENT WITH CUGS

- The Cities Program
- Urban Studies courses
- China summer program
- Received a research grant from CUGS to conduct research on urbanization in Senegal

NOOR MALIK '18

**MSc Global Governance and
Diplomacy, University of Oxford,
Merit Scholar**



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO STUDENTS APPLYING FOR THE DAVIS PROJECTS FOR PEACE?

Apply for something that you're truly passionate about and seek to make a difference in; this will transpire in writing your proposal. When writing your proposal, ask for help and reach out to people who have written proposals. The organization's website also makes the proposals of previous years available.

Make your proposal as realistic as possible; list out all of the potential difficulties that you might end up facing. When you can counteract those with solutions this will help you to devise a stronger proposal. Finally, the more specific that you can make your budget, the better!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE WOMEN AT TRINITY?

Do as much as you can leave your mark, whether it's at Trinity or whether it's in your hometown; on whatever level possible. Be as active as possible. Particularly for women like myself that come from developing country backgrounds, where we have a lot to change and a lot of obstacles to go up

against, I would to say that the one thing is to not give up.

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD YOU GIVE TO STUDENTS APPLYING TO POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS?

The more that you can do to outside of the classroom, the better. Take advantage of opportunities. Get involved with research projects, whether it's working with a professor or applying to the independent grants at CUGS. Try to get published, this will be a game changer for your application. Also, be proactive and look into funding as early as possible.

WHO IS A WOMAN THAT INSPIRES YOU?

Professor Janet Bauer is an incredible powerhouse that has been that has pretty much dedicated her entire life to the causes that she's passionate about. She does a lot of work with immigrants and refugees. One of the things that I love the most about her is the drive to investigate the lives of people that aren't from her own background, those that don't have the same kind of privilege that a lot of people in other societies might get.



NA FU

Ph.D. Student, The New School, Department of Politics, CUGS Luce Visiting Scholar, 2015-2016

WHAT WERE SOME UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES YOU HAD AT TRINITY THAT HELPED YOU TO ADVANCE YOUR ACADEMIC CAREER?

My time at Trinity helped me build up a network around the area. I invited two scholars to come talk to my class about their experience within sustainable development. I also had funding for academic travel. I went to Boston to meet with and present my work at the urban planning department at MIT and I visited the New School in NYC because that was going to be my home after Trinity.

Additionally, during summer 2017, I was invited to participate in the summer program in Asia. With my connections to production in Dongguan, China, I organized a visit in Cambodia to a factory that relocated from Dongguan. I knew the people at the factory, but it was my first time visiting the new location. That was a great experience and lesson for me.

ARE THERE ANY WOMEN IN YOUR INDUSTRY WHO INSPIRE YOU?

When I moved back to China to work, I worked under Cressica Brazzier, who is now pursuing her Ph.D. at MIT. She was my boss and now she is my friend. I see her as my mentor. From the first time I met her, I was struck by how she approaches the world. I admire how she pushes against rules. It was important for me as someone who just started working to learn where the boundaries are and how you can keep pushing them. The important part is the way you push them, to keep pushing, and and to make sure you don't burn yourself out.

There is a lot of pressure as a woman to do things like get married and have a baby. However, I think that is not necessary. It was important for me in Chinese society to have a model for another way. Now society is much more open, and I tell younger people that they should not follow the traditional model if that is not what they want to do. In my early career, she [Brazzier] was someone who showed me there are other options.

EMILY CUMMINS

Postdoctoral Fellow, Boston Medical Center

Kelter Postdoctoral Fellow, 2016-2018



HOW HAS YOUR TIME AT CUGS IMPACTED YOUR CAREER?

An amazing first position, it gave me a lot of time to develop and teach new courses as well as allowing for time my research and writing. It gave me great experience at a small liberal arts college, which remains my optimal career trajectory. It really served as a springboard to the other opportunities I have had and was also a great collegial space; I made a lot of great connections with people I'm still in touch with.

My PostDoc at CUGS allowed for a comparison of my fieldwork in Detroit; how change and redevelopment was happening there and probing how different stakeholders and actors were responding, and the similarly deindustrialized city of Hartford. My current PostDoc at Boston Medical Center looks at the opioid crisis; so I'm specifically thinking about how urban space is shaping drug use and how drug use is shaping urban space in turn. I will be teaching a class at Tufts in the fall on urban space and drugs use; I'm looking

forward to combining my main research focus with the new interest of medical sociology.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO WOMEN AT CUGS?

Utilize the the network of junior faculty; they are really committed to mentoring each other and mentoring students. For women, there are a certain set of challenges. Find your own community and those mentors who are really committed to helping young women through the process.

WHO IS ONE WOMAN WHO INSPIRES YOU?

One of my dissertation advisors continues to be an inspiration to me. She's a very smart, very committed and very dedicated woman who has found this amazing way to be both an amazing and productive scholar and a person who has a family and a life. She does not make any apologies for wanting both of those things and that has always been very inspirational to me.



JULIE GAMBLE

Assistant Professor of Urban Studies, Trinity College

WHAT IS YOUR RESEARCH FOCUS AND HOW DO YOU EXPLORE GENDER IN YOUR RESEARCH?

I study alternative mobilities like bikes and informal transport in Quito, Ecuador. Climate change has placed stress on cities around the globe and as a result have adopted sustainable transport approaches that aim to reduce emissions and curb motorization. The bicycle is not a means of transport accessible to everyone, but it is a low carbon option for many people. Yet, there remains a lot of work to transform social and cultural environments in cities to generate more friendly, safe places for cyclists and residents.

Starting from a feminist epistemological stand point, I study urban cycling in Quito, Ecuador where I have worked with a women's cycling collective, Carishina en Bici, which translates ironically from Quechua to "Bad Housewives that cycle". I have researched how their programming like women's cycling schools and

feminist activism has resulted in the empowerment of many women to moving around with more safety.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE GLOBAL URBAN STUDIES?

I'm originally from Houston, Texas and I am also Ecuadorean. Growing up and going back and forth between the US and Ecuador always shaped how I viewed the interdependencies between cities. This perspective inspired my research in Quito and is what motivates me to continue research on cities around the globe.

WHO IS ONE WOMAN WHO INSPIRES YOU?

I wouldn't be in the position if it weren't for my advisors that paved the way for me in urban studies. I owe a lot to Ananya Roy, Teresa Caldeira, and Alison Post. I am also inspired by brilliant feminist urban thinkers like Linda Peake and Ayonna Datta. I am always motivated by Latin American women urban scholars like Paula Jirón, Raquel Rolnik and Ana Falu.