



## Institute for Metropolitan Studies



## Report on Activities Fall 2021

# Mission Statement



The mission of the Institute for Metropolitan Studies is to advance public understanding of California's planning, urbanization and development -- How California Gets Made. Rooted in the CSU systems' historic commitment to teaching and public service, we believe a citizenry more knowledgeable about how California is made will be better able to address our region and our state's pressing social and environmental challenges. We focus on building sustainable civic infrastructure that helps improve decision-making, operation, efficacy and equity in California's planning and development systems, and on developing bold ideas, initiatives and novel collaborations across silos, sectors and metropolitan areas.



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## Introduction and Summary of Activities

The Institute for Metropolitan Studies at San José State University is an interdisciplinary center for research, service, and public programming with a focus on issues of significance to San José and the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Based in SJSU's Department of Urban and Regional Planning, the Institute was founded to bring the expertise of Silicon Valley's urban university to bear on the urgent challenges facing our city and region. The Institute's principals are Asha Weinstein Agrawal, Serena Alexander, Gordon Douglas, Richard Kos, Shishir Mathur, Laxmi Ramasubramanian, Kathrine Richardson, and Kerry Rohrmeier, Bo Yang, and Ahoura Zandiatashbar.

I became Director of IMS when I came to SJSU in 2017. With funding from the Office of the Dean of the College of Social Sciences, my goal since then has been to breathe new life into the Institute – which had been largely dormant for over a decade – by expanding its presence on campus and beyond through public events and collaboration with faculty and students from across campus on new initiatives.

I'm pleased to say that in the four years since I took the reins, the Institute has begun to thrive. This report presents the progress we have made thus far: public events, a scholarly working group, becoming a home for research on pressing urban issues, and new initiatives for furthering public understanding of urbanization in California.



A major focus of the Institute under my stewardship has been the production of an ongoing series of public events featuring important new books in urban studies. Willow Lung-Amam, assistant professor of urban planning at the University of Maryland, was our first guest when she visited in Fall 2017 to present *Tresspassers?*, her book about the influence of Asian Americans on culture, politics, and place in Silicon Valley. We also screened the award-winning documentary *East L.A. Interchange* followed by a conversation between the director and SJSU Professor Marcos Pizarro and an audience of some 60 students, staff, and community members. In 2018, Derek Hyra, Director of

American University's Metropolitan Policy Center, spoke about his book on the gentrification of a historically Black neighborhood; Fran Stewart presented *The STEM Dilemma: Skills that Matter to Regions*; and sociologist Japonica Brown-Saracino presented her new ethnography of queer identities in small cities, *How Places Make Us*.

Every semester since has occasioned more exciting book talks, research symposia, and other events supported by the Institute. We had both editors of the new *People's Guide to the Bay Area* share their project with us, and hosted a book launch for *Sparked: George Floyd, Racism, and the Progressive Illusion*, edited by Walter Jacobs, Wendy Thompson Taiwo, and Amy August. I collaborated with a student group to bring mobility justice scholar Adonia Lugo, and with SJSU's Dept. of Justice Studies to organize a presentation from McGill University's Jan Doering on race, crime, and gentrification. Other highlights include a public conversation with the renowned urbanist Mindy Thompson Fullilove reflecting on her work that has changed the way we understand cities and public health; a visit from prominent urban design thinkers Elizabeth Timme and James Rojas, which tied into a unique SJSU course on community placemaking; and the launch event for a scholarship initiative from the Rotary Club of San José to fund student research on housing and homelessness.

Another success was establishing of a University-wide working group for faculty and graduate students working on urban issues. As a relatively new arrival to campus myself, it has been an incredibly rewarding and educational experience just to seek out these people and invite them to help start something new. Over lunches and coffee in whatever meeting space we can find, I've been pleased to find how many others value the working group culture and relish the chance to talk about research with colleagues. We now have members from 14 different departments and divisions and from other area universities.

The Institute has long served as an organized research unit for consolidating the considerable research and community service projects led by its principals. Members of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in funding. We have decided to stop reporting all such funding as tied to the Institute – and instead report only our direct operating budget in the financial appendix here – but are working instead to make IMS itself a forum for resource sharing and rapid publishing opportunities for new research and pedagogy on urban and regional studies among our network.

Having carefully stewarded our initial pot of funding from the College of Social Sciences, I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish with limited resources. Today, we continue to grow with help from a dedicated student assistant, Lou Jimenez. We recently went live with a freestanding website for the Institute, and have welcomed our first IMS Fellow, Dr. Alex Schafran. And so in 2021 we are visioning again – expanding our fellows program and launching a major new initiative to make Institute for Metropolitan Studies a center for cross-disciplinary collaboration on the study and

teaching of urbanization at the megaregional scale in California. Our goal now is to seek external funding and partnership opportunities to help IMS continue to grow and thrive at the center of metropolitan debate and problem solving in San José and beyond.

If this report finds you and piques your interest in the Institute for Metropolitan Studies, please don't hesitate to get in touch. I look forward to welcoming you to one of our fantastic events or working group discussions, connecting you with the dynamic group of scholars affiliated with the Institute, or simply continuing the conversation about the issues that matter most to our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Douglas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gordon Douglas, PhD  
Director



## Public Events

The production of engaging public events, bringing big names and important thinkers in urban studies to SJSU while expanding our visibility in the Bay Area, has become central to the Institute's mission. IMS organized sixteen public events between AY 2017-2021, including book talks, panel discussions, and public forums. A sampling of event flyers can be seen on the following pages. Co-sponsors have included SPUR, CatalyzeSV, the Rotary Club of San José, the SJSU President's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and numerous University departments and student groups.



**SJSU** SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY  
The Institute of Metropolitan Studies Presents:

An Outdoor Film Screening in the SOFA Pocket Park!  
A RECKONING IN BOSTON

Featuring a livestream conversation with Director James Rutenbeck and special guest

Hosted by Veggielution  
Wednesday, Sept. 15th @ 7pm  
SOFA Pocket Park  
540 S. 1st Street  
San Jose, CA



RSVP Today!



"A RECKONING IN BOSTON LANDS LIKE DYNAMITE."  
- GERALD PEARY, ARTS FUSE

"EXPLORES THE ECONOMIC RACISM AND GENTRIFICATION RAVAGING BOSTON IN THE FORM OF MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT GOING TO BUILDING LUXURY CONDOS."  
- NICOLE VENETO, LETTERBOXD

Presented with generous support from:  
The SJSU College of Social Sciences  
SJSU's Real Estate Development Certificate Program | The Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning

**SJSU** SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY  
SJSU's Institute for Metropolitan Studies Present:

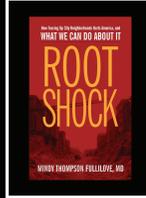
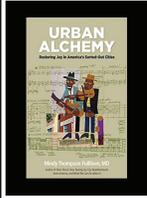
**"URBAN TRILOGY"**

Join us  
April 14th, 2021  
LIVE on ZOOM!  
@12:30PM (PT)

**Mindy Thompson Fullilove, MD**

"Buildings and neighborhoods and nations are insinuated into us by life; we are not, as we like to think, independent of them."

Register Today!  
<http://bit.ly/IMSFullilove>

**SJSU** SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY  
THE INSTITUTE OF METROPOLITAN STUDIES PRESENTS:

RACE AND URBAN SPACE -  
A BOOK LAUNCH FOR  
SPARKED: GEORGE FLOYD,  
RACISM, AND THE PROGRESSIVE ILLUSION

PRESENTED BY:

**Walter R. Jacobs** is a sociologist and the Dean of the College of Social Sciences at San José State University

**Wendy Thompson Taiwo** is an Assistant Professor of African American Studies at San José State University

**Marcia Williams** is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Social and Cultural Sciences at Marquette University

Join Us  
May 18, 2021  
@5:00pm (PT)

Register today!  
<http://bit.ly/SparkedSJSU>




SJSU'S INSTITUTE FOR METROPOLITAN STUDIES PRESENTS

**A PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA**

Featuring Authors  
Rachel Brahinsky & Alexander Tarr

SJSU'S INSTITUTE FOR METROPOLITAN STUDIES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE STUDIES PRESENT

**US VS THEM**  
A Conversation on Race, Crime, and Gentrification  
with author **Jan Doering, PhD**

Live Webinar  
Wednesday March 24, 2021 @ Noon

Register for link: <http://bit.ly/IMSJJanDoering>




**THURSDAY NOVEMBER 19, 2020**  
12:30 PM - 2:00 PM | LIVE ONLINE

Register for Webinar at  
[bit.ly/IMSpeoplesguide](http://bit.ly/IMSpeoplesguide)

## New Development Politics in Small City America



Join us for a presentation and discussion with Richard Ocejo (CUNY Graduate Center)!

The author of books on upscaling downtowns and the rise of craft economy will discuss his new work on the complex redevelopment and gentrification of smaller cities as the middle class flees expensive urban cores.

Light refreshments will be provided.

**Tuesday, November 27th, 2018**  
**4:30 - 5:30 pm**  
**San Jose State University**  
**MLK Library - Room 255**



**SJSU'S INSTITUTE FOR METROPOLITAN STUDIES AND THE ROTARY CLUB OF SAN JOSE PRESENT**

## SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS

**Tuesday, March 19th**  
**12:30pm - 2pm**  
**MLK Library, Room 255**

**Panelists:**

- Ray Bramson, Chief Impact Officer, Destination Home
- Megan Colvard, Regional Director, PATH
- Geoffrey Morgan, President and CEO, First Community Housing
- Andrea Urton, CEO, Homefirst Services of Santa Clara County, Inc.

Moderated by John Kovaleski Senior VP, Colliers International

Featuring San Jose Councilmember Raul Peralez

Join experts on housing and homelessness from across our region for a critical look at the affordable housing crisis in Santa Clara County and what needs to be done now. Learn about an exciting new initiative from Rotary and SJSU to support research on the most pressing urban issue of our time.



## TACTICAL URBANISM IN DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

**OCTOBER 17, 2018**  
**12-1:30PM | MLK LIBRARY ROOM 225**

TACTICAL URBANISM AND OTHER "LIGHTER, QUICKER, CHEAPER" APPROACHES TO STREETScape REDESIGN HAVE BECOME PROMINENT TRENDS IN CITIES AROUND THE WORLD IN RECENT YEARS. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BRING SUCH THINGS TO LESS TRENDY PLACES, TRADITIONALLY UNDER-SERVED COMMUNITIES, OR NEIGHBORHOODS THREATENED BY GENTRIFICATION, AND HOW CAN DESIGNERS MAKE SURE IMPROVEMENTS LIKE THESE REFLECT THE NEED AND PRIORITIES OF LONGTIME RESIDENTS?

JOIN FOR A CONVERSATION WITH A PANEL OF EXPERTS FROM CITIES ACROSS CALIFORNIA.

\*REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED\*

## The Road to Resegregation



**In Conversation with Alex Schafran (University of Leeds)**



Urban planner and geographer Alex Schafran will present his new book, *The Road to Resegregation: Northern California and the Failure of Politics*, about how political fragmentation among institutions at all levels have led to a newly segregated geography of NIMBYism, sprawl, and the suburbanization of poverty.

**Tuesday, December 4th, 2018**  
**12:30 - 1:30 pm**

**San Jose State University Student Union - Room 2B**  
**Lunch provided**



The Institute for Metropolitan Studies Presents

# TRESPASSERS?

ASIAN AMERICANS AND THE BATTLE FOR SUBURBIA

Over the last few decades, California's Silicon Valley has become not only the world's technological epicenter, but also one of the fastest growing, and most racially and ethnically diverse regions in the U.S. Spurred by the rise of tech giants like Google and Facebook, the region has attracted diverse, highly-educated immigrants from across the globe, particularly Asia. These migrants have built their new lives among the region's many predominately white, middle-class suburbs. *Trespassers?* explores the dreams and struggles of Asian Americans as they have made their homes in Silicon Valley suburbia, and the tensions that have often emerged over the region's changing character.

SJSU's Institute for Metropolitan Studies invites you to join Dr. Willow Lung-Amam as she discusses her new book on the role of immigrants in the changing urban landscape and their fight for inclusion within the suburban American Dream.



**WILLOW S. LUNG-AMAM**  
Willow Lung-Amam, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor in the Urban Studies and Planning Program and Director of Community Development at the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. She has written extensively on immigrant suburbanization, equitable development, gentrification, suburban poverty, and geographies of opportunity.

**NOVEMBER 15TH | 4:30PM**

Location: DMH 150

Please RSVP by clicking the flyer



The Institute for Metropolitan Studies presents

# East L.A. Interchange



Free film screening and discussion with Director Betsy Katin

Date: November 29, 2017  
Time: 6:00 pm (doors open at 5:30 pm)  
Location: Student Union Theatre  
Free Food!!

Tells the story of working-class, immigrant, Boyle Heights, the oldest neighborhood in East Los Angeles and how it has survived discriminatory housing covenants, Japanese-American internment, redlining policies, the building of the largest freeway interchange system in the nation, and the current forces of gentrification.

Please join us for the screening of this award-winning film followed by a discussion with the director.



THE INSTITUTE FOR METROPOLITAN STUDIES PRESENTS:

# RACE, CLASS, AND POLITICS IN THE CAPPUCCINO CITY

DEREK HYRA, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Monday February 5th at 5:30PM  
San José State University - ENG 285 (7th & San Fernando)

PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SPUR

"A SOPHISTICATED, ACADEMIC APPROACH TO STUDYING SOCIAL TENSIONS AT THE FOREFRONT OF CURRENT POLITICS, DEVELOPMENT, AND CULTURE." - THE WASHINGTON POST



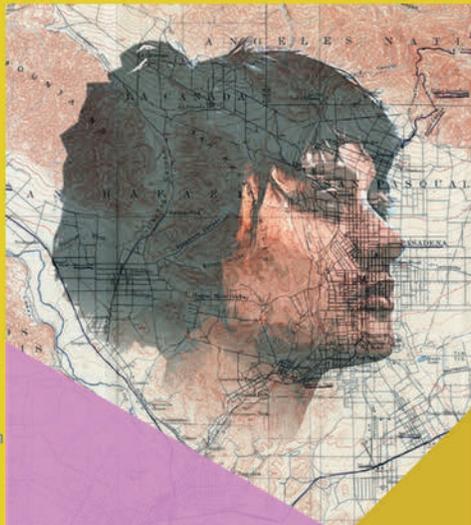
Derek Hyra is Associate Professor of Public Affairs and Director of the Metropolitan Policy Center at American University. A nationally recognized scholar of neighborhood change, race, and urban politics, he is also the author of *The New Urban Renewal: The Economic Transformation of Harlem and Bronzeville*.

"A POIGNANT, PROVOCATIVE, AND WELL-WRITTEN STUDY OF GENTRIFICATION."  
- ELIJAH ANDERSON



SJSU's Institute of Metropolitan Studies Presents

Through the lens of LBQ communities in four small US cities, Brown-Saracino tells the story of the myriad ways that place and community influence LBQ cultures, politics, and identities.  
- Verta Taylor, UC Santa Barbara



## How Places Make Us

Novel LBQ Identities in Four Small Cities

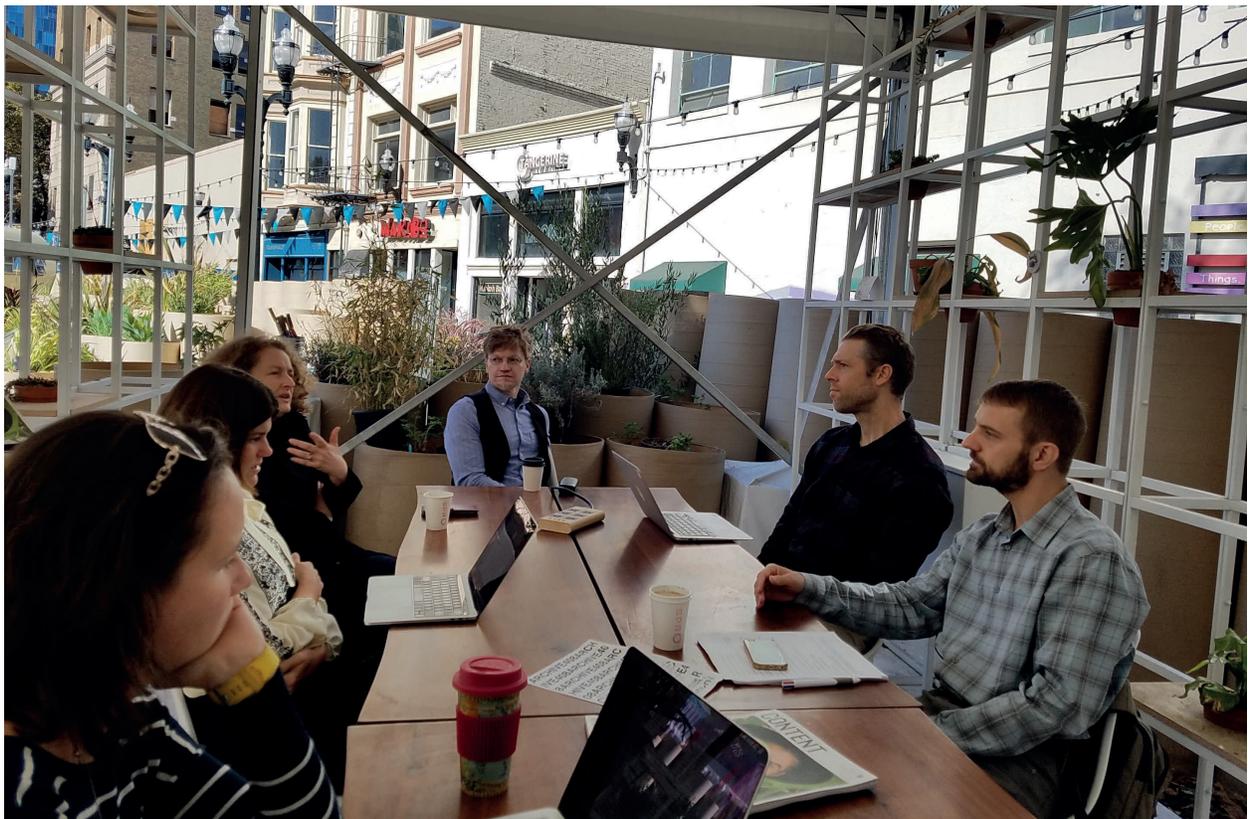
May 2nd @ 5:00 PM in BBC 226

JAPONICA BROWN-SARACINO



# Urban Studies Working Group

Founded in 2018, the IMS Urban Studies Working Group brings together faculty and graduate students from across San José State and beyond. The group meets regularly (in person when conditions allow), roughly once a month, to build interdisciplinary connections and opportunities for collaboration. It also provides an opportunity for members to share work in progress for workshopping and constructive feedback. Presenters to the working group have included Anthony Raynsford (Art and Art History), Kathleen McConnell (Communication), Matthew Holian (Economics), and MPA graduate student Liz Lange. During the COVID-19 pandemic we kept up our meetings online, and even spun off a “quarantine book club” during the strange summer of 2020. Today, members include both part-time and full-time faculty representing 14 departments, programs, and administrative offices ranging from Anthropology and Environmental Studies to Chemistry, Linguistics, Justice Studies, and the MLK Library, as well as faculty members at UC Berkeley and Mills College.



# Affiliated Teaching, Research & Community Service



The Institute for Metropolitan Studies has traditionally accounted for all of the funded research and community service of its principals, the affiliated faculty of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning. From large survey analyses to community-engaged service learning projects in Urban Planning courses, these activities often total several hundred thousand dollars a year in grant funding. We are no longer itemizing these projects as part of the IMS financial reporting, but do highlight some of the intersections between Institute activities and teaching and research at San José State.

With funding from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, a neighborhood “tactical placemaking” project led by Professors Gordon Douglas and Virginia San Fratello connected students with community members to design and build a new public space in San José’s Northside neighborhood over two semesters in 2018. IMS presented a special event tied to the class featuring prominent urban placemaking thought leaders.



Every year, Professor Rick Kos leads students in the Masters of Urban Planning Capstone Studio course in an intensive community-based planning effort in collaboration with a local partner and CommUniverCity. In Fall 2021, IMS worked with community partner Veggielution to host a topical film screening for the public in the SoFA Pocket Park, the study site for the studio class.



# ORU Financial Report

<b>SJSU BUDGET AND ACTIVITIES FINANCIAL SHEET FOR MULTI-YEAR ORU/ORTU REPORTS</b>					
<b>ORU/ORTU Name: Institute for Metropolitan Studies</b>				<b>Period: Jul 2019 - Jun 2021</b>	
				(Jul, year - Jun, year)	
<b>70000-1023-660003 (Class code 4677)</b>					
	RF or TF Acct #	RF or TF Acct #	SJSU Operating Fund 70000- 1023-660003	SJSU Operating Fund 70000- 1023-601303	Total
<b>Beginning Cash Balances:</b>			\$ 1,800.00		\$ 1,800.00
<b>Inflow (revenue):</b>					
Fund Raising					\$ -
Contributions/Donations					\$ -
Grants/Contracts					\$ -
Event Revenue					\$ -
*Other					\$ -
University/College				\$ 697.50	\$ 697.50
<b>Total Cash Inflow</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 697.50	\$ 697.50
<b>Outflow (expenses):</b>					
Release Time/Assign Time					\$ -
Admin Asst/Curator				\$ 697.50	\$ 697.50
Meals & Entertainment			\$ 44.11		\$ 44.11
Travel					\$ -
Book Collection			\$ 41.46		\$ 41.46
Education					\$ -
Speaker Honorarium			\$ 450.00		\$ 450.00
Cost of Event(s)					\$ -
Scholarships					\$ -
*Other					\$ -
<b>Total Cash Outflow</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 535.57	\$ 697.50	\$ 1,233.07
<b>Net Cash Inflow</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (535.57)	\$ -	\$ (535.57)
*Property/InKind Contributions					
<b>Ending Cash Balances:</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,264.43	\$ -	\$ 1,264.43



## Looking Ahead

After four successful years reinvigorating and reimagining the Institute for Metropolitan Studies, IMS is in a strong position today. We are recognized across campus, throughout San José, and around the Bay Area as an increasingly visible and relevant center for and scholarship on urban issues. And we find ourselves now again looking ahead to a new moment of growth and visioning.

In the Spring of 2021, IMS was able to hire its first paid staff member, a wonderful student assistant named Lou Jimenez. Lou has already made a huge impact assisting with event facilitation (no small feat in the era of Zoom webinars and outdoor events) and helping us to launch our own freestanding website, which we are still building out, at [sjsu.edu/metropolitanstudies/](https://sjsu.edu/metropolitanstudies/). And the 2021-22 academic year is already off to an exciting and productive start with a documentary film screening in a public park, a forthcoming book talk, and a busy calendar for the Working Group as well.

In August, the Institute officially welcomed its first visiting scholar, Dr. Alex Schafran, who will be the first in a cohort of IMS Fellows. A respected California policy voice and

prolific scholar of regional urbanism, Dr. Schafran is the author of *The Road to Resegregation: Northern California and the Failure of Politics* and *The Spatial Contract: A New Politics of Provision for an Urbanized Planet*. With more fellows coming onboard in the coming months and an existing group of dedicated SJSU faculty from the Working Group, we intend to spend the Fall semester outlining new directions for the Institute.

Among these will be an initiative focused on advancing civic dialogue about regional systems and governance in the greater Bay Area and, ultimately, throughout California. The project will feature an online portal to coordinate research, reporting, policy, and pedagogical resources on these topics, but will also play out among educators in their classrooms and through innovative gatherings of researchers, teachers, policymakers, and the public. I believe IMS can become a leading resource for educators and anyone working on these important issues. Crucially, I am also confident that we can attract external funding for such a project. Looking to the long term, I can imagine something unique to the CSU system in approach and impact – a coordinated research, teaching and service initiative based at SJSU and led by IMS but effectively system-wide, with contributions and buy-in from people at multiple campuses and external partners.

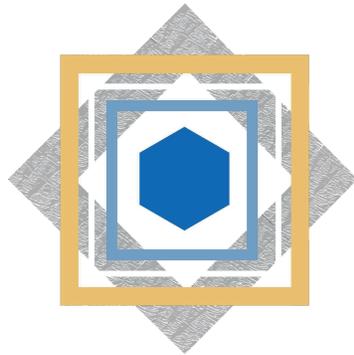
In these ways and more, the Institute for Metropolitan Studies will continue its mission of furthering public understanding of the issues facing our city and our region, as a forum for the metropolitan conversation that we need to have, for many years to come.



For more information, please contact:

Dr. Gordon Douglas  
San José State University  
gordon.douglas@sjsu.edu

[www.sjsu.edu/metropolitanstudies](http://www.sjsu.edu/metropolitanstudies)



**SJSU** SAN JOSÉ STATE  
UNIVERSITY

**Institute for Metropolitan Studies**

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