

Introduction: Silicon Valley Sociological Review

This year's *Silicon Valley Sociological Review* is grounded in the Department of Sociology's commitment to "exposing students to ideas and foundations that prepare them to build a more humane, just, and sustainable world" with sociological training preparing students to "apply innovative ideas to some of our most pressing social problems."

The Department of Sociology bachelor of science and minor expose students to ideas and foundations that prepare them to build a more humane, just, and sustainable world. Students gain a "sociological imagination" that unveils a greater understanding of the social forces and processes that shape our societies and influence institutions, cultures, and individual decisions. Santa Clara promotes sociological perspectives and insights that are applicable to our own lives, careers, and futures. In addition to gaining critical thinking and analytical skills, sociology students enjoy opportunities to work closely with faculty mentors and engage in internships and charitable experiences where they can apply innovative ideas to some of our most pressing social problems.

While this year's volume was organized by Professor Laura Robinson, each of the contributors' work is the result of mentorship with our faculty. Regarding the research pieces by *Bryce Akira Nishikawa* and *Samantha Frank*, Associate Professor Patrick Lopez-Aguado should be credited with the quality of their work having begun the research process with them in the 121 Capstone. Subsequently, other faculty reviewed the work and offered their positive assessments of the work. *Bryce Akira Nishikawa's "Public Policy and the Future of Ethnic Studies"* was praised as an "Excellent execution of a mixed-method study on the understandings of diversity on campus!" and on the research design for which reviewers "appreciated the introduction of the CA context and the passage of Assembly Bill 1460 early in the paper, which points to the relevance of the work." *Samantha Frank* was commended for "*The Entanglement of Education and Employment in an AI Economy*" as: "Very well written" and providing a "good literature review" to foreground a "great topic to explore and very good context for design."

Turning to the next contribution, "*Jibu Customer Carbon Savings in Rwanda*" by *Lauren Kelley and Lia Kraaijvanger* was deemed to be an "an excellent example of an applied report." This report was supported and guided by the authors' community partners Tom Sanskara, Caroline Kirabo, Tosca Terra, Divine Mpano, Jean-Paul Niyongabo, Richard Buntu, and the entire Jibu Rwanda team. Faculty and SCU supervisors included *Miller Center Senior Director of Academics Dr. Jen Merritt Faria*, *Miller Center Senior Manager of Campus Engagement Linda Gentry*,

Department of Sociology Professor Laura Robinson, and Professor of Environmental Studies and Sciences Iris Stewart-Frey. Faculty reviewers deemed that the research “exemplifies sociological research for social impact” that demonstrates “a commitment to creating positive social change through actionable sociological research.”

As the Department of Sociology also values applied work in the public good, the second section of this year’s volume highlights contributions from the 2024 *Community-Based Work in Sociology Award Winners: “Reflections on Migrant Farm Working Families”* by Sarahi Espinoza Salamanca excerpted from research originally written for Ethnic Studies 165: Community-Based Research Methods in the fall 2022 under the direction of Professor Anna Sampaio. *Sarahi Espinoza Salamanca* was recognized for work external to SCU for her founding of the nonprofit DREAMer’s Roadmap (<http://dreamersroadmap.org>), which award nominators commended stating: “her non-profit and the role of data, theory, and applied research in changing structures and helping organizations work more effectively” indicate years of doing “much work, proven through the community,” serving “so many people” and being “so very deserving of this award!!” Sahari’s mentors include Professor Laura Nichols and Professor Laura Robinson from the Department of Sociology, as well as Assistant Professor Jessica Fernandez and Professor Anna Sampaio from the Department of Ethnic Studies.

The volume’s final contribution is “*Community through SCU Sociology Club*” by *Kelly Lelapinyokul* and *Christina Nelson* who were awarded the *Community-Based Work in Sociology Award Winner for Work Internal to SCU*. The award reflects their contributions to the campus community and work as Co-Chairs of the Sociology Club for the past three years. Nominating community members recognized them for having “worked tirelessly to increase connections between students and faculty in and out of the department.” Christina’s accomplishments in nomination materials include selection as a Jean Donovan Fellow, REAL Fellow, and Immersion Leader all of which were valued as “desire for real connection and change in communities beyond our own.” Nominating materials regarding Kelly lauded “insights about social inequities to influence ways to create lasting social change: and recognizing that “the classroom is just the beginning, and it matters what we do with the knowledge our degree gives us.”

We are delighted to share their work with you in the 2024 *Silicon Valley Sociological Review!*