



GREATER LANSING CHAPTER

United Nations Association of the USA

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Join us for an Earth Day Week Event - Thurs., April 20, 2017 7:00 pm

“The Relationship of Human Migration to Climate Change”

Climate change is already having an effect on human habitats causing social disruption and migration. As the celebration of Earth Day approaches, come learn about this aspect of the climate change puzzle. Participants will hear some of the facts around this challenging problem from the United Nations and other sources. Movements of refugees and migrants also have impacts on the environments of the places they pass through and settle in. A panel of experts will share their experiences gleaned from studies in the Middle East, Thailand, the Greek Isles and Africa. This is a great opportunity to learn more about an important issue of climate change and to have your questions answered.



Moderator:

Stephen Gasteyer

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Sociology, Michigan State University (MSU).



Panelist:

Daniel Ahlquist

Assistant Professor,
James Madison College, MSU.



Panelist:

Jennifer Olson

Assistant Professor,
Dept. of Media and Information



Panelist:

Sophia Koufopoulou

Instructor,
Dept. of Sociology, MSU.



Panelist:

Aaron Ponce

Assistant Professor,
Dept. of Sociology, MSU.

Location: Edgewood United Church of Christ, 469 N. Hagadorn Rd., East Lansing

Free and Open to the Public – Light Refreshments – Free parking at the church

For more information contact GL-UNA Board Member Bob Barnhart at 517-896-2850

Co-sponsors
of this event:



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Biographies:

Moderator: Stephen Gasteyer Assistant Professor, Dept. of Sociology, Michigan State University (MSU).

Dr. Stephen P. Gasteyer is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Michigan State University. Dr. Gasteyer's research focuses on the nexus between water, land, community development. Specifically, his research currently addresses: 1) community capacity development and civic engagement through leadership training; 2) the political and social processes that enable or hinder community access to water and land resources, specifically (but not exclusively) in rural communities; 3) the class and race effects of access to basic services (water, sanitation, food, health care); 4) community capacity, community resilience and water systems management; 5) the impacts of greening in economically depressed small cities; 6) the community aspects of bioenergy development; 7) international social movements and community rights to basic services; and 8) facilitating cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary partnerships to address water and land resources management. Before coming to Michigan State University, Dr. Gasteyer was on faculty in the Department of Human and Community Development at the University of Illinois. Prior to that, he was Research and Policy Director at the Rural Community Assistance Partnership in Washington, DC and a research consultant on issues of global water governance. Dr. Gasteyer was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mali from 1987 through 1990, and worked with environmental non-governmental organizations from 1993 through 1998 in the Palestinian territories. He received a BA from Earlham College in 1987, and a Ph.D. in Sociology from Iowa State University in 2001.

Panelist: Daniel Ahlquist Assistant Professor, James Madison College, MSU.

Professor Ahlquist's teaching and research explore human relationships to nature (as both an idea and a thing) and the ways in which political and economic inequalities between social groups are played out through uneven relationships to the environment. In his teaching, Professor Ahlquist is particularly interested in examining the political ecological dimensions of agriculture and food systems, conservation, inequality, environmental justice, and synthetic biology. In his current research, Professor Ahlquist draws primarily on the lenses of environmental sociology and political ecology, as well as ethnographic and comparative historical methods, to explore the cross-cutting themes of state conservation and development policies, agrarian change, displacement, and changing forms of inequality in Thailand and across the global South. Professor Ahlquist comes to Michigan State from Duke University, where he served as a post-doctoral fellow in the Thompson Writing Program. At Duke, he received the Faculty Award for Outstanding Leadership in Sustainability, and he looks forward to working with Madison students to further sustainability and environmental justice efforts at Michigan State, in the Lansing-area community, and beyond. He holds a Ph.D. in Development Sociology from Cornell University.

Panelist: Sophia Koufopoulou Instructor, Dept. of Sociology, MSU.

Sophia Koufopoulou, Professor in MSU Dept of Sociology is working with the refugees flooding into Lesbos Island in Greece. She has worked with the UNHCR in dealing with the refugee needs and spoke about gender issues in the refugee crisis at a recent GL-UNA event. She was recently honored with the Inspirational Woman of the Year Award for Community Engagement by the MSU Center for Gender in Global Context.

Panelist: Jennifer Olson Assistant Professor, Dept. of Media and Information, MSU.

Jennifer Olson is an associate professor in the Department of Media and Information in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences at MSU. She helped spearhead the Information and Communications Technology and Development (ICTD) program, a joint College Communication Arts & Sciences and College of Engineering undergraduate minor, research program and study abroad. The focus of the ICTD program is to learn about the role of communications and information technologies, such as mobile phones, computers and the Internet, in economic and social development. With Erik Goodman in Engineering, she leads a project bringing Internet and solar-powered computers to rural schools in Tanzania. This project has evolved to be a great study abroad program bringing MSU students to work in Tanzanian schools every May to June.

In addition to these activities, Jennifer conducts research on the impact of climate change on agriculture and communities in East and Southern Africa in projects funded by NSF, the Rockefeller Foundation and USAID. The projects involve climate modeling, climate data coupled to spatial crop, ecosystem and hydrology models, remote sensing, and socioeconomic and ecological fieldwork. She has over 20 years of living and working experience in West, Central and East Africa as a Peace Corps and United Nations volunteer, a development practitioner, and as a scientist.

Panelist: Aaron Ponce Assistant Professor, Dept. of Sociology, MSU.

Aaron Ponce is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Michigan State University. His work addresses core questions at the intersection of political sociology and global social change, focusing on international migration and immigrant reception. Most recently, his work has examined migration to the Nordic universalist welfare states and the influence of changing demographics on social cohesion across Europe. More broadly, Dr. Ponce seeks to uncover the causes and consequences of historic and contemporary social change linked to globalization with an emphasis on the construction and contestation of socio-cultural diversity (ethnic, religious, sexual, linguistic). Dr. Ponce earned his PhD in Sociology at Indiana University. He also holds a JD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a MA in Linguistics from the University of Texas at Austin, and a BA in International Studies from the University of Miami. He has worked as a Research Associate at the Pew Research Center in Washington DC, served migrant workers in the Upper Midwest with Legal Action Wisconsin, taught English to students in Ibaraki, Japan with the JET Program, and interpreted and translated for overseas patients at the National Institutes of Health.