

WINTER *newsletter*

MARCH 2025

Dear smartname,

Welcome to the Winter 2025 edition of the Bill Anderson Fund's quarterly newsletter. As the frost begins to melt and signs of impending growth emerge, I look forward to highlighting a few of the activities and accomplishments that have been underway within the BAF network these past few months. But first, it is important to acknowledge the elephant in the room.

As you've no doubt noticed, the climate around the kind of work we do to support underrepresented minority students and marginalized communities has shifted significantly over the past several weeks. We've been dismayed to see life-saving initiatives and infrastructure dismantled across our nation, as well as livelihoods disrupted and projects threatened within our network and broader professional community. While there is no question that these are challenging times, we and the communities we represent are no strangers to adversity. Our forebearers persisted in their struggle for basic rights and dignity through times of both progress and regression. Likewise, systematic research on racial disparities in the impacts of environmental hazards and disasters began as acts of resistance within systems that were often hostile toward evidence of systemic racism in policy and practice.

These legacies of persistence and resistance continue with us, as we move forward with supporting today's promising minds in becoming tomorrow's leaders. BAF fellows and alumni remain committed to mitigating hazards and minimizing suffering in communities that are too often overlooked and dismissed. We are proudly building a disaster workforce that reflects the diverse composition of American society.

New Read: Lessons in Preparedness

BAF Fellow Carlo Chunga Pizarro recently authored “[Deportation and Disaster: Preparedness Lessons From Undocumented Immigrants](#),” an article that explores how people who are undocumented prepare for the threat of deportation and what we can learn from the preparedness strategies that this constant state of precarity forces them to employ. This article serves as the newest installment of *Equity and Inclusion in Disasters*, a [special collection](#) of the Natural Hazards Center’s Research Counts series that features articles from Bill Anderson Fund Fellows and Alumni in a brief and accessible format for a broad audience. This collection is made possible by support from Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies.

Research Spotlight: Examining Rural Places, Disability, and Underserved Populations in Disaster Webinar

Earlier this month, three Bill Anderson Fund Fellows presented their research on critical issues involving rural spaces, disasters, and underserved populations as part of the Natural Hazards Center’s [CONVERGE Webinar Series](#).

Mason Alexander-Hawk, of Texas A&M University, delivered a presentation entitled *Resilience in Recovery? Understanding the Extent, Structure, and Operations of Nonprofits in Addressing the Unmet Needs of Disaster Survivors*, which summarized findings from research examining variation in the locations and characteristics of long-term recovery groups in disaster-affected communities nationwide.

Annika Doneghy, from Case Western Reserve University, presented *Rethinking Disability in Disaster Cycles*, which discussed key concepts the intersection of disability and disasters and introduced research questions for her recently funded dissertation research, which focuses on perceptions of disability in the context of disaster and ways in which these insights can inform inclusive disaster response.

Judanne Lennox-Morrison, of Texas A&M University, presented *Can it Get Any Worse? Low Attention Disasters in Rural Communities*, which seeks to understand whether and how disaster preparedness programs may be maladapted for the needs of rural areas, with an ultimate goal of developing equitable emergency management approaches that are consistent with the needs and capacities of these communities.



A ROUND OF APPLAUSE

AWARDS | ACCOLADES | RECOGNITIONS

Congratulations to our Fellows and Alumni!

BAF Fellows have received a variety of awards, accolades, and recognitions in the past few months!

Here is a selection of highlights:

- BAF Fellow **Annika Doneghy** of Case Western Reserve University has been awarded a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Grant. Her study, entitled "[Social Adaptations and Recovery After Natural Disasters](#)," examines the differential impacts of social and economic support, overall health status, and emergency resource management on post-disaster outcomes.
- BAF Fellow **Nyla Howell** of Rutgers University received the [Jeanne X. Kasperson Student Paper Award](#) from the American Association of Geographers's Hazards and Disasters Speciality Group for her paper "Challenging Disasters Through Black Geographies: Deciphering the Plot of Resilience in West Baltimore, Maryland, USA." The award highlights hazard and disaster research from emerging scholars in the field.
- The University of Kentucky Association of Emeriti Faculty awarded BAF Fellow **Jessica Nwafor** with the 2024 Association of Emeriti Faculty Endowed Fellowship. This award recognizes outstanding achievements as a University of Kentucky doctoral student and indicates the Association's confidence in the student's academic potential as a future faculty member at a college or university.
- BAF Fellow **Esther Oyedele** received the Virginia Tech Center for Communicating Science Nutshell Award. This award is bestowed following a competition in which graduate students present their research in just 90 seconds. See her winning presentation [here!](#)
- BAF Fellow **Michelle Ruiz** of the University of Florida won first place recognition for a PhD level poster presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Florida Society of Geographers. Each year, outstanding oral and poster presentations are recognized at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels.
- Two BAF Fellows—**Carlo Chunga Pizarro** and **Rosie Sanchez** of the University of California Irvine—were accepted as Fellows for the [California State University System Pre-Professor Program](#). This program supports University of California, Irvine doctoral students' transition to a faculty position by engaging them in an immersive semester-long experience.

Thank you for being part of our community, and for your continued support as we adhere to our mission during these uncertain times.

Sincerely,



Nnenia Campbell, Ph.D.
Executive Director
The William Averette Anderson Fund



Copyright © 2025 The William Averette Anderson Fund, All rights reserved.

The Bill Anderson Fund
hello@billandersonfund.org

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [unsubscribe](#) from this list.