I'm late, again. What can I say? Maybe that I'm retired and entitled to slow down a bit? I could say that, but it would just be a cover – I should have gotten onto this as soon as the weather began to change. Maybe it's the malaise that seems to be permeating B'more lately – the horrible Freddie Gray incident and the fallout that followed; the spike in homicides locally, and the sad state of our local sports – first the O's and now the Ravens. Maybe it's a mistake to juxtapose the truly important and light entertainment, but I have to say that for many of us, they both take a toll. But why be a gloomy gus? There is much to celebrate as well, so let's get onto it.

First, a word about transitions. We have a new chair, Beverly Silver! Beverly succeeded Andy who had been filling in as interim chair while Beverly freed up some space to take on this job. We thank both of them for stepping forward and most certainly wish Beverly well as she assumes the awesome duties that come with the job. And I cannot help but comment that breaking the succession of white male leadership in the department is long overdue! Some may wonder why that didn't happen long ago, with Doris Entwisle the obvious candidate. I can speak with authority on the point, having been closer to Doris than anyone else on the faculty. It's quite simple: Doris avoided it like the proverbial plague! Her preference was to stay in the background, and I can assure everyone that she took on a great deal in her quiet way. But the limelight? That wasn't Doris's style.

I like Beverly a great deal, and I like her instincts stepping into the job. Beverly tells me that she wants to send around the occasional note briefing alums on happenings in the department. That's splendid indeed and I am happy to defer. Well, almost – I'll say a bit about some pleasing developments with our undergraduate programming below, but just a bit.

So you are my "beat" and I do have news to report.

I'll start with Henry Perry (1977), again. I report on Henry so often that I maybe should set up a "Perry Corner" regular inset for these notes. In part, that's because Henry has a lot to brag on, but it's also because he tells me about it. That's a large hint to the rest of you. These notes are a vehicle for sharing news with your friends, and for keeping up contact. We are scattered, but that doesn't mean we have to be apart. Please do keep me in mind for developments of interest, professional and personal.

Now to Henry. In my note of last April, it was the Ronald McDonald House Charities Award for Medical Excellence. Now it's the Carl Taylor Lifetime Achievement Award, conferred by the International Health Section of the American Public Health Association. Here is what Henry has to say about this awesome recognition: "I am deeply humbled to be honored in this way, and also grateful that professional colleagues see me as worthy of this distinguished award. And, of course, the award holds very special additional meaning in the sense that Carl Taylor was my mentor for four decades."

Wow – that's quite something, and Henry says "humbled," you know he means it. That's one of the things that I so like, and admire, about Henry.

Amy Holmes (2009) reports that she has received tenure at the American University in Cairo. No doubt her book *Social Unrest and American Military Bases in Turkey and Germany since 1945* (Cambridge University Press 2014) helped the cause. I recall a good many years back attending a work-in-progress presentation in the seminar room where Amy reported some preliminary results from her dissertation research. "Ambitious," I thought. And "interesting." Clearly I'm not alone in that assessment – congratulations Amy! Amy stopped by the department recently and wanted to touch base, but I wasn't around. I was disappointed, but that's one of the things that comes with retirement.

Siri Wakentian (2015) has moved on to a position as an Advanced Quantitative Education Researcher at RTI International in their Center for Equity and Evaluation. She will be involved with randomized control trials and some quasi-experimental design work in substantive areas that range from college-prep interventions in rural schools to after-school programming in LA to interventions for ESL students in Seattle. I saw Siri in DC earlier this month at a conference on "school desegregation for the 21st century." We were both there out of interest – not on the program. I'll say a bit about what drew me to the conference later in this note.

Barbara Condliffe (2015) also has moved on, to a position as Research Associate in the K-12 policy area at MDRC. Barbara finished her dissertation in the spring and will have two chapters from it in the edited volume on summer learning that I am putting together with colleagues from the National Summer Learning Association (Teachers College Press, scheduled for the Fall of 2016). She and I are co-authoring one chapter that updates the summer learning story for Baltimore with her dissertation data and she will have a solo-chapter on the issues that challenge poor families in accessing summer programs. That chapter uses qualitative date from her dissertation, and it is a lovely writeup. Aaron Pallas (1985) also will have a chapter in the volume (his on the middle class family advantage in summer learning), so it's practically a family affair!

Siri and Barbara were IES Sociology trainees and they have moved into precisely the kinds of positions that we and the IES had in mind for the program. And what a success – in addition to Siri and Barbara, Matt Messell and Erik Westland just submitted their dissertations to the GBO, following Robert Nathenson, who wrapped up his last year. And though Stephanie Slates resigned her Traineeship to pursue a terrific professional opportunity in New Orleans, she too is using the skillset she acquired, in her case in the service of school reform and the children of New Orleans.

This is quite a record of accomplishment. And even though IES chose not to renew us, I think it's objectively fair to say "we did good!" I want to take this opportunity to commend all our Trainees for their fine work and to wish them great success going forward.

Salvatore Babones (2003) reports that an excerpt from his game-changing book *Sixteen for '16: A Progressive Agenda for a Better America* was published recently at Salon.com. Here is the link:

http://www.salon.com/2015/05/09/education_reforms_big_lie_the_real_reason_the_right_has_declared_war_on_our_public_schools/

This write-up is from his chapter on education (spoiler alert: Salvatore doesn't like the for-profit takeover of public education and the union-bashing that comes with it). Well done Salvatore!

Bob Manning (1989), another regular in these occasional notes, reported in the spring that he stepped down as Dean at the KSA to become Director of Graduate Studies and Chair of Business Administration. That was months ago, and with Bob who knows what adventures have followed since – Bob lives a very exciting life. He also shared big news on the family front: that his wife will be joining him to teach in the law school there and that their children "will finally be able to ride a camel!" Continuing he says: "Our daughter (9 yr) thinks that it will be cool wearing an abaya every day and dad thinks it is great that he will not have to upgrade her wardrobe very often!"

My spring mailing elicited an auto-reply from Sylvia Golombek (1990), in two languages:

"Thank you for your message. I no longer work at YSA.
If you'd like to reach me directly, please do so at golombek@verizon.net

Many thanks.

Muchas gracias por su mensaje. Ya no trabajo en YSA.
Si desea contactarme directamente, por favor hágalo a golombek@verizon.net

Muchas gracias."

I'm still working on my baby-Spanish and I'm thrilled to report that I can read Sylvia's note in the original. The fact that it's almost all cognates helps, but I'm not proud - I'll take what I can get!

If anyone checks in with Sylvia, please let her know that I am awaiting an update.

I've also heard from another amigo, Tom Rodiguez (2009). Tom has been something of academic itinerant for some time now, teaching part-time at a number of schools while his partner completed her training. But that's now coming to an end, and the two of them are hoping for a more settled existence with real dual career jobs:

"I am well and still lecturing at Tufts University which just gave me a 2015-16 year contract as they seem pleased with my teaching here. Things have been going so well in Boston that I've actually had to turn down several offers to lecture at various colleges in the area. But I've chosen to concentrate on teaching at Tufts in order to build a strong teaching portfolio that will hopefully open doors in the near future.

Daniela, my partner and the reason why I moved to Boston, will be done with her Master in Genetic Counseling at Brandeis next summer. That means that I've dusted off my vitae and have now applied to posts at various campuses in the California State University system. They are all assistant professor posts similar to the one I held at California State University Stanislaus for three years. You recall that I resigned there in order to follow Daniela to Boston; but she's always wanted to return to her beloved Cali upon completing her degree here."

Let's see if our good wishes can help push Tom and Daniela over the top! Good luck to both.

Marty Levin (1967) never writes to me, but I manage to keep track of him anyway. Marty retired last years from the University of Memphis, where he was chair of Sociology. He and sociology wife Wanda Rushing are contemplating next steps, and that could include retirement to Baltimore. They were here for a couple of days in the spring looking at housing options, but they have high standards and it's not clear that B'more's humble housing stock will do for them, but Kathy and I are hoping. It would be great fun having Marty and Wanda nearby.

And to come full circle, this from Gudmund Hernes (1971), who wrote in response to my April mailing:

"Following the news from Baltimore now, I get a déjà vu feeling, having been a student there in the summer of 1968. But there is another side to it: After the '68 riots, the then Department of Social Relations undertook several studies, and its staff, students and IBM 1401 was engaged. The Kerner Commission had published its report before the summer riots, but little had been acted on. So the department contributed to knowledge about the causes, the participants etc. Yet reading about the events now, it does not seem that the root causes were addressed. The knowledge for a different public policy was produced and made available. But did it remain on the shelves, and did its findings evaporate from courses and reading lists? Does each generation have to repeat the scenes to change the staging? So here is an idea for a seminar organized at Department of Sociology: "What did we learn - and why didn't we learn". Perhaps something to consider? Best wishes from Norway"

An excellent idea indeed – thank you Gudmund, for thinking of us, and for your continuing interest in our local happenings. The department I know has rallied in response to the Freddie Gray tragedy. Perhaps Beverly can fill us in.

Now, as promised, a quick report on our undergraduate program: we are at just over 60 majors, and all time high (largely in the strength of the newish international development and social policy tracks), there is a notice posted at the end of the hall on our AKD chapter membership which lists 65 inductees since the Chapter's inception in 2006 (Katrina McDonald and I were the initial faculty sponsors; now it is Meredith Grief), and Elizabeth Talbert was recipient of last year's Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Teaching Assistant Award. Here is one of the testimonials that accompanied the award:

"I have been extraordinarily lucky to have Elizabeth Talbert as a teaching assistance twice during my time at Hopkins. I have grown as a student through her leadership and tutelage. Elizabeth is a teacher I will remember for the rest of my life. Through her kindness and patience, I learned to successfully write a policy memo and to confront social policy issues facing society."

That's quite a record for the department, and kudos to Elizabeth for her fine work in support of our undergraduate programming.

That about covers my Alumni report, but I would like to conclude by sharing with you a project I've been working hard to launch. I think I am at liberty, but if need be I can justify it owing to my standing as a fellow departmental alum (2014!). The project is a school improvement initiative centered here in Baltimore that I am calling the Thurgood Marshall Alliance (see the attached one-page overview). The idea is to help schools that that are committed to diversity in their enrollment (by family income first and foremost, but also diversity in terms of race/ethnicity) be the kinds of schools they want to be – schools that are welcoming to children of all backgrounds and with programming that will help children of all backgrounds achieve at a high level. It is altogether an exercise in applied sociology – everything about it is research informed, starting with the premise that the best way to help poor children is to get them out of schools that labor under the burdens of concentrated poverty.

This is an altogether new turn for me, and an unexpected one -- some of you may recall an essay that I wrote and we read in some of my graduate seminars entitled "In Defense of Ivory-towerism." Well, I still believe in the importance of basic research, but I've also come to believe that those of us who have something to contribute ought to at least give it a try. I am committed to this project, which I believe has transformative potential. But it will be a tough slog, one school at a time. I have some startup funding from an internal Hopkins competition under the auspices of the 21St Century Cities Initiative and I am hard at work trying to put all of the pieces into place. Please do share your thoughts, and please also wish me well.

Best to all,

Karl

MARSHALLIANCE

The Thurgood Marshall Alliance

Strengthening Schools and Community through Diversity

The Thurgood Marshall Alliance was founded in 2015 by Dr. Karl Alexander to assist Baltimore schools that are committed to economic and racial diversity. Children attending Alliance schools will experience authentic integration that breaks through traditional barriers and helps children of all backgrounds thrive in their academic and social development. Toward those ends, the Alliance will support its member schools with outreach and communications support to meet enrollment targets, technical support for implementing best practices in their educational programming, and supplemental resources for family wraparound services (e.g., health screening) and extended time learning opportunities. Alliance schools will be welcoming places with strong academic programming; they will provide the kind of educational experience all of Baltimore's children deserve.

The Alliance is named in honor of Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. A graduate of Frederick Douglass High School in Baltimore City, Marshall applied to and was denied admission to the University of Maryland Law School because of his race, attending the Howard University Law School instead. As head of counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense Team, Marshall argued the 1954 Brown desegregation case before the Supreme Court. In declaring the Southern states' dual school system to be unconstitutional, the Court held that: "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

The Alliance subscribes to that same principle: poor and minority children who are segregated in high-poverty schools apart from others are disadvantaged educationally and in their later life prospects. So too are the non-poor and non-minority children who are separated from them. Through their experience of diversity, children who attend Alliance schools will be better prepared for tomorrow's world.

Karl Alexander, Director

Eric Rice, Associate Director

Advisory Board

Muriel Berkeley, Board of Directors, Baltimore Curriculum Project

Yindra Cotman-Dixon, President, Federal Hill Preparatory School PTO

Bill Ferguson, State Senator, Baltimore 46th Legislative District

Kenneth Jones, CFO, Annie E. Casey Foundation

Richard Kahlenberg, Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation

Roslyn Mickelson, Chancellor Professor of Sociology

Wes Moore Founder and CEO, BridgeEdU

Halley Potter, Fellow, The Century Foundation

Wendy Samet, Executive Director, The Middle Grades Partnership

Craig Spilman, Academic Director, Creative City Public Charter School

Karolyn Tyson, Professor of Sociology, UNC-Chapel Hill

Dominic Wiker Development Director, the Time Group

The Alliance will partner with schools—public and private; traditional and charter—that pledge to follow a set of core principles and practices, including;

- Setting an enrollment goal that is majority middle class, between 25% and 40% low income, with no single race/ethnicity comprising more than 60% of the enrollment
- Prioritizing inclusive educational programming, so that the school's diversity infuses each child's daily experiences
- Providing holistic student supports, including health and mental health services and both afterschool and summer learning opportunities
- Committing to serve all children, including those with special needs and those for whom English is a second language

The Alliance is in the process of forging the many partnerships required to effectively provide its services. It will launch in the 2017–18 school year with no more than three school affiliates. Beginning in 2018–19, it will partner with interested schools throughout Baltimore City.

Leading Education Groups Support the Marshall Alliance Concept:

Baltimore Education Research Consortium

Baltimore Community Foundation

Downtown Baltimore Family Alliance

Evergreen Health Co-Op

Family League of Baltimore City

Fund for Educational Excellence

Higher Achievement

Johns Hopkins Center for Prevention & Early Intervention

Johns Hopkins Urban Health Institute

Johns Hopkins University School of Education

National Summer Learning Association

Strong City Baltimore

For more information about The Thurgood Marshall Alliance, please contact Karl Alexander at **410-701-0775** or **karl.MarshallAlliance@jhu.edu**

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