Message from the Interim Director

We are proud to introduce our first TCCS newsletter, which will tell you about our first cohort of students and share announcements and accomplishments of our TCCS faculty and community.

On behalf of the TCCS faculty, we are excited to welcome our stellar inaugural class to the MS program, who saw the program’s possibilities as matching their own commitments and interests. Each student sought out TCCS for the ways our unique focus on diverse communities, transdisciplinary research methods drawing on culturally meaningful arts and sciences, and social justice mission matched their own academic and professional goals.

We look forward to working with faculty, staff, UMB Institutes and Centers, campus and community partners and students in the program as we implement our shared mission, to learn from and with community efforts to improve lives and promote equity through the power of knowledge. This is a critical year for TCCS as we strengthen the ties between affiliated faculty across the campus, establish the program with the first masters cohort, recruit new students for our second masters cohort, and prepare to admit the first PhD class in Fall 2017. We look forward to building an intellectual community with our unique UMass Boston mix of critical, comparative and transnational perspectives on race, ethnicity, and immigration, transdisciplinary methods using knowledge for social change, and university/community partnerships.

We are excited about coming together to build a strong TCCS program which strengthens the capacity of our faculty and ethnic institutes, prepares our graduates for work that makes a difference in increasing social justice, while creating pathways through doctoral studies for the next generation of faculty who share these commitments.

Ester R. Shapiro, PhD
(aka Ester Rebeca Shapiro Rok)
Interim Director, Transnational Cultural and Community Studies (TCCS)
Associate Professor, Psychology Department
Research Associate, Mauricio Gaston Latino Institute
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Candida Rose Baptista
Candida (Candy) is a 2nd generation Cape Verdean-American from New Bedford, Massachusetts. She is a vocalist, entertainer, songwriter, educator, mother and grandmother. In 2005, she received a BA (honors) in Music (UMass Dartmouth), specializing in African-American/World music performance with a minor in African-American Studies. In 2006, Candy released her 10-song debut CD titled “KabuMerikana: The Sum of Me”, which focused on her Cape Verdean-American identity. Her academic interests in TCCS include developing a curriculum in order to teach Cape Verdean and Cape Verdean-American history through the eyes of music and culture. She is working as a Graduate Assistant with the Trotter Institute, focused on Black Cape Verdean and Lusophone communities and connecting with Cape Verdean students on campus.

Sarah "Roo" Franzel
Roo holds an AA in Graphic Design and a BA (high honors) in Anthropology (UMass Boston). An artist at heart, Roo is most proud of her photography and collaborative art. In 2002, she and world-renowned artist Joe Davis collaborated on his "DNAographies" (photographs using arrays of DNA as photo emulsion), which has been shown globally. Born with a desire to empower women with low self-esteem, Roo and photographer Craig McCormack created Heroine Adventures, an online graphic novel where women share their stories of heroineship. In 2010, some of the novel’s cover designs were shown in a South Boston gallery. Roo has also tutored since 2002; for her work with elementary school children at Tutoring Plus of Cambridge in 2014, she received the Louis Menand III Volunteer Appreciation Award. In this spirit of collaboration and dedication to work in partnership with diverse communities, Roo hopes to bring her talents to TCCS. She is working as a TA for Introduction to Music.

Thary S. Lim
Thary is the daughter of Southeast Asian refugees and identifies as 2nd generation Cambodian American woman. She holds a BA in Asian American Studies from UMass Boston and is the first in her family to receive an undergraduate degree. Thary serves as both a Teaching and Research Assistant on campus, working with Professor Rosalyn Negron on a study of cultural factors that can support underrepresented student success in STEM majors, an Executive Assistant for PointOneNorth Consulting, and an Intern for Merck Family Fund. In her spare time, Thary enjoys hiking, traveling, running, yoga, photography, peacemaking circles, and being involved in diverse community initiatives. Thary is excited to be in the first cohort in the TCCS MS Program. She hopes to integrate her many academic, professional, and personal experiences in TCCS.
**Tariana V. Little**
A world traveling “word-nerd”, Tariana loves diverse foods, languages, and documentaries. She holds an MS in Clinical Investigation (UMass Medical School) and is pursuing a Certificate in Digital Health Communication (Tufts University). Following her mantra of “intentional creativity for social change”, Tariana is co-founder of the media production company EmVision Productions and her photography (TVLENSES) focuses on human strength and sensuality. Tariana serves on the National Millennial Advisory Board for BeVisible Latina, the first social networking and career-building site for Latinas by Latinas, and works with Chica Project, an intergenerational mentoring organization for young Latinas in Massachusetts. Centered on social justice and her Afro-Dominican-German heritage, Tariana chose TCCS for her graduate studies because the program offers the opportunity to bridge creative arts with a range of study methods to better partner with marginalized communities and impact social change. She is the TA for the TCCS program, and will be focusing her energies on a social marketing plan for recruiting the next cohort of TCCS applicants.

**Tri Quach**
Tri Quach and his family are ethnic Chinese refugees of the Vietnam War. Tri is currently the Program Coordinator for Asian America Studies at UMass Boston. He began his work organizing in Boston’s Chinatown. Previously, Tri was the Coordinator for the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY). Started in 1993, CAPAY was a youth organization that focused on youth organizing training and critical analysis development in order to contribute to positive community change. Continuing his work in student development and media/art, Tri currently works with Professor Shirley Tang on the AsAmSt370 Media Literacy class. Through the class, students connect their under-represented stories to a political and social context. Tri has created and exhibited installations speaking to the issues of community organizing, history, and identity, including “Laundry day: the next wave” and “Stories from Asian America”. Tri seeks to bring his various interests and backgrounds into TCCS.

**Iria Dopazo Ruibal**
Originally from Spain, Iria is a transnational student with educational experience in different European countries and the US. She has a rich and diverse professional experience in the health care field in her home country, ranging from working in primary care, hospitalization, education, entrepreneurship, and as an international health inspector for the Spanish government. To broaden her training, she obtained a graduate certificate in Gender, Leadership, and Public Policy from UMass Boston before enrolling in the TCCS Master’s program. She currently works at the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy, and with professor Miren Uriarte at the Boston School Committee. Passionate about social justice, Iria is also interested in the intersections of health and education among immigrant populations.
Kim Soun Ty
Kim is a 2nd generation Cambodian American womxn who grew up in Lynn and Dorchester, MA. Her research interests include the Cambodian diaspora, the intersectional identities of womxn of color in the U.S., and Asian American youth. She served as a member of the Digital Storytelling in Asian American Studies teaching team for the national AANAPISI collaboration in 2014-2015. Kim received the East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU) 2014 Trailblazer award. The Trailblazer award is given each year to a student who embodies ECAASU’s goal to inspire, educate, and empower those interested in Asian American issues and communities. As the award winner, Kim spoke at the 2014 ECAASU Conference in Washington, D.C. She hopes to one day obtain a doctorate degree and become a professor in Asian American Studies, with a focus on the Cambodian diaspora. She has a Graduate Assistantship with Professor Shirley Tang to continue their work in Digital Storytelling. In her free time, Kim also loves to eat, workout, and write.

Nicole K. Young
Nicole Young was born and raised in South Boston. She received a BA in Anthropology and a certificate in Labor Studies from UMass Boston. She is currently a Director of Programs at the Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA), the student-led nonprofit of Harvard University. In this capacity, Nicole supports the undergraduate student leaders running programs in the neighborhoods of South Boston and the South End, as well as PBHA’s prison education, gender, special needs programming, and youth-homeless shelter. She has worked in many different professional capacities, with particular interests in substance abuse and trauma management. Nicole is excited to join TCCS to explore race and ethnic hierarchy structures, criminal justice, specifically issues on gangs, prison reform, community identity, and activism.

Armando Vizcardo
Armando is the TCCS Administrative Assistant. He is pursuing a BA in Economics and double minoring in Psychology and Sociology, seeking to understand how economic and societal conditions impact individual and community wellbeing. He is experienced in grant writing, event planning, and office management, through an internship at the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts and work at the Children’s League of Massachusetts. An LLOP alum, he received The Robert Hildreth Award, designed to support UMass Boston Latino students in a research experience in Latin America. Armando spent a month at the University of Quintana Roo, for a study titled “Micro-Entrepreneurship Strategies of Maya Migrants: A Socioeconomic Analysis”, which he will present in a campus forum. He is part of many research projects, including ¡Todos Juntos!, a Gastón Institute community project assisting Boston immigrants obtain MassHealth insurance, and a study on cultural factors facilitating the success of under-represented minority STEM students. He aspires for a career in research and social policy to improve Latino communities. Armando loves eating out, watching documentaries, and playing sports.

Introducing Our Staff
Gastón Institute receives renewal funding for ¡Todos Juntos!: Increasing Access to Health Insurance through Faith and Action (CPI 2014 001257, Office of Minority Health)

The Gaston Institute’s ¡Todos Juntos! Project uses a faith-based model aimed at increasing access to health insurance for underserved Spanish and Portuguese speaking communities through the Affordable Care Act, under the leadership of Gastón Institute and Program Director: Dr. María Idalí Torres. Consistent with both Gastón Institute and TCCS goals, ¡Todos Juntos! engages communities with the University and its programs to address important issues improving resources for well-being through research that increases our knowledge base and leads to social action. The program works with CRUZA -the Alliance for Latino Health through Faith and Action- to engage churches serving underserved populations as trusted venues for providing culturally and linguistically competent education, outreach and assistance aimed at enrolling individuals in an affordable and appropriate health insurance plan. The Latino communities involved with the project are in Lawrence, Waltham, Pittsfield and the Berkshires, New Bedford/Fall River, and Greater Boston. Research is carried out by a paid site coordinator, faith leaders, and volunteers, with assistance from UMass Boston students, among others. TCCS first year graduate student Iria Dopazo, and TCCS Administrative Assistant Armando Vizcardo, both have research roles in the program.

UMass Boston's Archives “Cuban Activists and the Cuban Revolution: 1960’s to 1990’s”

Professor Miren Uriarte along with Daniel Ortiz, Director of the Healey Library, staff from the Healey Archives, Mariana Gaston and invited guests from the Cuban American community participated in the opening of the UMass Boston's Archives exciting new project “Cuban Activists and the Cuban Revolution: 1960’s to 1990’s”. The archive gathers the historical documents of the Antonio Maceo Brigade of 1972, focusing on the 55 Cuban American immigrants, many of them college age, who had left Cuba as children in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, and returned to Cuba as part of the Brigade to initiate a political dialogue and get to know revolutionary Cuba. This courageous group defied the right wing Cuban American groups who conducted violent attacks to prevent these dialogues, the Cold War political rhetoric and embargo imposed by the U.S government, and emotionally loaded prohibitions issued by their own Cuban exile families to establish these dialogues. Many of the participants in the Brigade became prominent in the U.S. as University Professors, policy makers and leaders in their fields. Professor Uriarte organized and donated Mauricio Gastón's papers and photographs to UMass Boston's Archives, and Ana Camayd donated Yohel Camayd-Freixas' papers and photographs.
Joanne Riley, Curator of Special Collections at the UMass Boston Archives, noted that the recollections and dialogue among Cuban American faculty and guests in attendance were moving and informative. The discussions highlighted the importance of the archive as a window into an intense and politically important period whose impacts are still evolving as Cuba and the U.S. begin to open relationships for the first time in over 50 years. From the perspective of TCCS, we see these archives as helping us to better understand how this group of Cuban Americans was able to take a step that helped transform their own lives while opening possibilities for dialogue between Cuba and the United States. In discussing next steps for development of the collection, TCCS plans to work with Library Archives to convene a panel of Cuban American participants in the Brigade who will speak about their experiences, and how their activism and connections with Cuba’s revolution influenced their lives and work.

**Ester Shapiro presented at the Health & Human Services Hispanic Heritage Month in DC**

Professor Ester Shapiro, TCCS Interim Director, was invited to present at the Health & Human Services (H&HS) Hispanic Heritage Month (10/7/2015) program in Washington DC, titled "Hispanic Americans: Energizing the Nation's Health Care Delivery" on "Culturally Sensitive Mentoring and Digital Resources for Health Careers". The presentation argued for the importance of mentoring Latino students on careers in health equity through access to career centered digital storytelling, exposing them to a wide range of Latino health professionals working in settings where they can provide direct services while addressing inequalities affecting Latino health. One project, designed by Professor Shapiro in collaboration with the Latino Caucus of the American Public Health Association and implemented during the 2013 APHA meeting in Boston, called “Faces and Places of Latino Public Health”, conducted short video interviews with Caucus members telling the story of their own journey in the public health field. The program was streamed live to all H&HS offices nationally, and included H&HS Acting Deputy Secretary Mary Wakefield, Director of Head Start Blanca Enriquez, as well as presenters from NIH, HRSA and H&HS on Hispanic/Latino health and workforce issues. For the program and resources, see the H&HS Hispanic Employee’s Organization, which organized the presentation: [http://www.hhsheo.org/2015-hhs-hhm/](http://www.hhsheo.org/2015-hhs-hhm/).

Video stream of 10/7/15 panel: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCm1F2YgMbk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCm1F2YgMbk)

The resources handout that Professor Shapiro prepared for the presentation describing “Faces and Places of Latino Public Health” and what we learned from that project and from other digital storytelling mentoring resources is available on the TCCS web site.

**News from Office of Community Partnerships & TCCS contributes to “Our Convention”**

UMass Boston’s [Office of Community Partnerships (OCP)](http://engage.umb.edu) seeks to identify, strengthen, and create collaborative community partnerships that advance our mission as Boston's public research university. OCP’s primary purpose is to support engaged teaching and research projects advancing university goals while accelerating positive community change, making them a valuable resource for TCCS student and faculty projects. Through a collaborative approach, OCP and every college and division across the university designed a university-wide web application supporting existing and new partnerships. [UMass Boston Engage](http://engage.umb.edu), an app currently still in Beta phase ([http://engage.umb.edu](http://engage.umb.edu)), serves as a central resource connecting individuals and groups across the university with partner organizations in Boston and elsewhere, enhancing partnerships while
promoting the everyday work of our campus. Users can navigate a rich assortment of activities engaged by UMass Boston faculty, staff, students, and partners, from local service-learning courses and internships to global research projects. The Partner with UMass Boston Form ([http://engage.umb.edu/partner-with-umass-boston](http://engage.umb.edu/partner-with-umass-boston)) is designed to assist community members, organizations, and agencies with establishing new connections to the university. The App enables users to identify faculty with relevant expertise and interests, determine existing or past connections with partner organizations, and serves as a resource for community members to learn about services and opportunities. Try out the App and offer feedback to Lauren Anderson of OCP: Lauren.Anderson@umb.edu

On 10/9, a team of TCCS students were invited by OCP to participate as note-takers for workshops taking place at Our Convention, a gathering at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate designed as the 1st annual conference emphasizing generational responsibility among young adults (ages 20 to 35), many of whom first come to Boston to attend college, to engage their civic participation in visioning Boston’s future. Our Convention was hosted by City Awake as part of Hubweek, a first-of-its kind civic collaboration between The Boston Globe, MIT, MGH, Harvard University intended to be Boston’s version of South by Southwest and highlight Boston’s resources in arts, education and health.

Our Convention convened over 50 Boston organizations, including UMass Boston’s Emerging Leaders Program and the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, each nominating five representatives. The 300 young adult “delegates” formed small teams addressing specific issues including transportation improvements, housing affordability, and civic vitality, to collaborate and formulate rapid prototype solutions (policy, product, service, etc.) addressing these issues in innovative ways that would inspire continued collaborations through the nominating organizations and new coalitions. TCCS graduate students Sarah Franzel, Tariana V. Little, and Kim Soun Ty, along with Armando Vizcardo, TCCS Administrative Assistant, and Professor Ester Shapiro, participated as part of the UMass Boston documentation team, contributing to understanding both process and recommendations emerging from a very lively session on increasing civic vitality in Boston. The TCCS team report will form part of a policy document reporting on the convention’s outcomes. Results will be shared with elected officials, industry leaders, issue experts and the broader community, and will inform planning for a 2016 follow-up to Our Convention. In reviewing our findings and impressions, our team agreed that the potential impact of this gathering would largely depend on how well they worked with their many partner organizations to more fully engage the full diversity of Boston communities in implementing shared visions for needed change.

**TCCS Student Striving for Local and National Impact**

TCCS first year graduate student Tariana V. Little published a first-author article in a special issue of *Practicing Anthropology* (October 2015) that focused on reflexive, intersectional ethnography in relation to her 2013 HEAT Ethnographic Field School fellowship in Tallahassee, Florida. Passionate about applied social justice, she also served as a student panelist in the CIT Forum “Teaching and Learning about Structural Racism: Student Engagement & Activism in the Community & Classroom” (Oct 15, 2015). More recently, Tariana attended the Partners Healthcare Connected Health Symposium in Boston, MA as a Symposium Scholar (Oct 29-30, 2015) and was one of six students nationwide to be appointed to the American Public Health Association’s Journal Media Focus Group, where she will collaborate with students to help strengthen the American Journal of Public Health website and its media outlets.
TCCS Community to Present at the Building Inclusive Communities Conference

Ester Shapiro, Shirley Tang, Tariana V. Little, and Tri V. Quach will be leading a workshop, “Bridging Alternative Paths to Health: Holistic approaches that promote both culturally meaningful and equitable approaches to wellbeing” as part of the Building Inclusive Communities Conference (Dec 3, 2015) hosted by the School for Global Inclusion and Social Development at UMass Boston.

TCCS Community to Present at the “Blacks in Boston” Conference at Boston College

Candida Baptista and Tariana V. Little will be presenting papers on creative media and the Dominican and Cape Verdean diaspora as part of the “Blacks in Boston: Black … and Immigrant” conference (April 2, 2016) hosted by Boston College’s African & African Diaspora Studies Program. Ester Shapiro and Yvette Modestin, Director of Encuentro Diaspora Afro, will also be presenting on Encuentro’s work in raising awareness of Afro Latino histories and identities in Boston schools and community settings.

TCCS Presents: Maria Vertkin, Executive Director, Found in Translation

On Thursday 10/8, Maria Vertkin, Founder of the Community-Based Organization Found in Translation, presented on the topic: Educating & Empowering Immigrant Women as Medical Interpreters & Health Equity Leaders: Organizational History & Lessons Learned. Winner of prestigious local and national awards for social innovation, including Grinnell College’s 2015 Innovator for Social Justice Prize and the 2013 Echoing Green Global Fellowship, Maria Vertkin and Found in Translation have incorporated social justice values, social entrepreneurship and evidence-based practices from admissions and student support through graduation to employment placement and alumni leadership development.

We asked her to speak to the question, how did Found in Translation go from the personal and professional vision of a young woman and immigrant leader to an award-winning organization that has raised nearly a million dollars in four years of operations?

Ms. Vertkin, who won the Rosie’s Place Kip Tiernan Fellowship while still a senior majoring in social work at Regis College, shared insights from her own background as a Russian immigrant adolescent growing up with limited economic resources but appreciating the wealth of language and cultural knowledge and ingenuity characterizing poor, immigrant women in caring for their families and communities.

Working her way through school, she worked in social service organizations and developed her own ideas about how to bring together social services with work-force development opportunities, while establishing relationships with role-models and mentors who helped her implement her vision and the meticulous documentation of practices and outcomes that has given the organization credibility and significant support and recognition. These personal experiences and insights were as important as her formal education, and she encouraged students in attendance to explore the Kip Tiernan Fellowship: http://rosiesplace.org/who_we_are/kip_tiernan_social_justice_fellowship

Learn more about Found in Translation @ www.found-in-translation.org/
TCCS 600: Professional Seminar, Thursdays 4:30PM - 5:15PM
Consists of a series of workshops focused on assessing, developing and supporting skills necessary for a successful graduate experience: professional and academic writing skills, doing a literature review and using library databases for research. **Taught by:** Ester Shapiro, Assistant Professor of Psychology ([Ester.Shapiro@umb.edu](mailto:Ester.Shapiro@umb.edu))

TCCS 610: Topics in Transnational Cultural and Community Studies, Thursdays 5:30PM - 8:15PM
An introduction to critical terms, concepts and issues in TCCS. These include: racialization and racial formation, power and privilege, epistemological exploration, history and contemporary experience, interactions and connections between national and transnational contexts. This course centers communities of color in the U.S. and the historical and contemporary forces through which they have developed transnational and diasporic relationships individually, structurally, collectively and culturally. We will engage with these concepts in the context of power relationships and from a humanistic framework grounded in empathy and individual transformation. **Taught by:** Loan Thi Dao, Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies ([Loan.Dao@umb.edu](mailto:Loan.Dao@umb.edu))

TCCS 612: Community Formulation and Development, Wednesdays 8:00PM - 9:45PM
This course teaches students concepts, theories, and techniques for understanding community dynamics, conducting research in communities, and practicing in and with communities in development processes. The course develops an understanding of the institutional, national, and global forces acting at the neighborhood level, including an examination of the interactions among public policy, the interests of community residents, and nonprofit and private stakeholders. Covering such areas as economic development, education, social welfare, and grassroots organizing – with a focus on the formation and development of communities of color – the course draws on post-colonial and transnational studies to explore decolonizing traditional understanding(s) of community. Students will understand communities as complex, dynamic, contested, contradictory, and a principal arena of organized collective action to change or preserve the status quo. Theories and approaches will be examined in the context of case studies drawn from local communities. **Taught by:** Luis Aponte Parés, Associate Professor of Community Planning ([luis.pares@umb.edu](mailto:luis.pares@umb.edu))

TCCS 623: Transdisciplinary Research Methods, Wednesdays 5:00PM - 7:45PM
This course provides a transdisciplinary, problem-centered approach to conventional research methods training. Students develop advanced research skills in transdisciplinary methods and approaches, to understand transdisciplinarity as a research principle, and to examine the development and application of transdisciplinary research methods in the arts, humanities and sciences. This course offers students hands-on experience in transdisciplinary research, with emphasis on developing methodological versatility across multiple levels of inquiry: 1) self/identity; 2) community/relationships; and 3) global/transnational. **Taught by:** Rosalyn Negrón, Associate Professor of Anthropology ([Rosalyn.Negron@umb.edu](mailto:Rosalyn.Negron@umb.edu))
TCCS 611: Migration and Diaspora, Wednesdays 5:30PM - 8:15PM
This course explores the most recent scholarship and most dominant theories in the field of migration and diaspora studies. The course brings together theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches from both the humanities and social sciences with various forms of cultural expression (e.g., poetry, film, music, and literature). Themes explored include, for example: the multiple meanings and models of diaspora and migration; the relation of migration and diaspora to conquest, colonialism, postcolonialism, refugeeism, political exile; heterogeneity of diasporic groups; assimilation, acculturation and transculturation. Taught by: Aminah Pilgrim, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies (Aminah.Pilgrim@umb.edu)

TCCS 622: Transdisciplinary Research in Practice, Tuesdays 4:00PM - 6:45PM
This course offers students hands-on experience in transdisciplinary research, focused on designing and carrying out actual field and/or archival research, applying multidimensional framework analysis, and identifying forms of data across disciplinary boundaries. Students work on an individual or a collaborative transdisciplinary research project to apply concepts and skills gained from grounded research experiences in community settings. Taught by: Shirley S. Tang, Associate Professor of Asian American Studies (Shirley.Tang@umb.edu)

TCCS Electives

TCCS 714: Colonialism, Human Development & Modernization, Mondays 5:30PM - 8:15PM
This course traces, examines, and debates the genealogy of two critical ideas/concepts in the history of human development and modernization. Their common denominator is Colonialism. Taught by: J. Cedric Woods, Director for the Institute for New England Native American Studies (Cedric.Woods@umb.edu)

TCCS 710: Globalization & Population Movements, Tuesdays, 7:00 - 9:45pm
This course provides a critical inquiry into the forces shaping international, transnational, and intra-national migration flows and their relationship to globalization. Taught by: Sofya Aptekar, Assistant Professor of Sociology (Sofya.Aptekar@umb.edu)