

The background of the entire page is a detailed, light-colored line drawing of a city street grid, overlaid on a solid dark red background. The grid shows various block shapes, street widths, and building footprints.

**BLOOMBERG
HARVARD**

City
Leadership
Initiative

Summer Fellows

Look Book 2025

cityleadership.harvard.edu



Roberto Andrade

AFFILIATION

Master in Public Policy
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Racine, Wisconsin

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Bridging Quality of Life, Data
Analysis, and Customer Service

Roberto is a Master in Public Policy student from Comitán, Chiapas, a small city in southern Mexico. He studied international relations and political science in Mexico City, where his passion for data and policy led him to pursue a career in local government.

During his undergraduate years, he explored how quantitative analysis could shed light on complex social issues, winning awards for his research on indigenous representation in Latin America. After graduating, he joined Mexico City's government, where he worked on projects ranging from crime analysis and public safety to coordinating the city's COVID-19 response using real-time data. He is passionate about using evidence to inform decision-making and believes that thoughtful, data-driven public policy can improve the everyday lives of communities.

Outside of work, Roberto enjoys playing tennis, going to music festivals, and perfecting his pancake recipe.



Elizabeth Bliss-Burger

AFFILIATION

Master of Theological Studies
Harvard Divinity School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Colorado Springs,
Colorado

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Improving Outcomes for People
Experiencing Homelessness and
the Quality of Public Spaces

Elizabeth completed a Master of Theological Studies at Harvard Divinity School, with a concentration in ethics, politics, and religion. With nearly a decade of experience advancing education equity, she began her career as a high school teacher and later served as a public health educator. Most recently, she has partnered with MIT's Prison Education Initiative as an adjunct instructor, teaching leadership courses alongside incarcerated students. Her classes weave together political theory, philosophy, and neuropsychology, inviting students to explore the self as a site of transformation and possibility.

Before HDS, Elizabeth worked as a lead re-entry specialist at Rikers Island and as a consultant for From Prison Cells to PhDs, where she facilitated evidence-based curricula with a restorative justice practice and supported individuals navigating post-incarceration career and housing transitions. She holds a Secondary Science Teaching Certification from Johns Hopkins and a Bachelor of Science in biology and psychology from the University of Denver.

Her favorite classroom is still the outdoors—whether trail running, climbing peaks, or, most recently, learning to bike Boston's roads.



Adam Delgado

AFFILIATION

Master in Public
Administration
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Hutt City, New Zealand

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

From Consultation to
Collaboration: Building Trust
through Participatory Democracy

Adam brings experience across public, private, and nonprofit sectors with a focus on advancing social impact. He began his career in Washington, D.C. at Booz Allen Hamilton and the International Monetary Fund and later led global user experience research on civic, health, and social impact product teams at Meta in San Francisco. His interests center on how human-centered design, community-based research, and cross-sector partnerships can promote fairness, inclusion, and representation in national, state, and local governments through digital access and services for everyone.

Adam graduated from Whitman College with a bachelor's degree in politics and is currently pursuing a Master in Public Administration at Harvard Kennedy School, where he is an Equity Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership.



Sebastian Fernandez

AFFILIATION

Master in Public Policy
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Charleston, South
Carolina

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Basin Flood Action Program

Sebastian was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from Cornell University. Motivated by a deep commitment to advancing racial and socioeconomic equity, he felt compelled to return to the South when Hurricane Ida struck during his final year of college. Sebastian dedicated himself to work and volunteer efforts in New Orleans, researching crucial law and policy issues surrounding housing and disaster recovery at the Louisiana Supreme Court.

At Harvard, Sebastian is deepening his commitment to public service while sharpening his ability to craft innovative solutions to pressing public issues. He is a research assistant and Equity Fellow at Harvard's Center for Public Leadership. In January, he joined the mayor's office of Scottsdale, Arizona, as a Transition Term Fellow through Harvard's Taubman Center for State and Local Government, igniting his interest in municipal governance. During his free time, Sebastian enjoys producing hip-hop beats and cooking breakfast burritos.



Rachel Fischer

AFFILIATION

Master in Urban Planning
Harvard Graduate School
of Design

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Shreveport, Louisiana

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Optimizing Code Enforcement
and Property Standards
Operations

Rachel is an urban planner and educator passionate about leveraging the built environment to create more equitable, inclusive spaces and communities. Before pursuing graduate studies at Harvard, Rachel worked as a college counselor and educator, experiences that grounded her interdisciplinary, people-centered approach to community engagement and placemaking. Last summer, she led the Mystic Greenways Asset Inventory Project with the Mystic River Watershed Association, collecting and analyzing data on the conditions of greenway assets across the region. Her work supports long-term efforts to make these greenways safer, more comfortable, and more informative—ultimately helping municipalities work collaboratively toward shared improvements.

Rachel holds bachelor's degrees in architecture from Barnard College and in modern Jewish studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary. She recently completed her Master in Urban Planning at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Outside of her professional life, Rachel enjoys creating art, flipping and tumbling on the gymnastics floor, and exploring the outdoors.



Marin Furuyama

AFFILIATION

Master in Public Policy
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Seattle, Washington

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Using Data to Improve
Seattle's Downtown
Activation Efforts

Marin is a first-year Master in Public Policy candidate at the Harvard Kennedy School, with interests in equitable economic development and urban innovation. Prior to Harvard, she worked in product management at Citibank, where she focused on digital transformation initiatives within the Treasury & Trade Services division. She holds a bachelor's degree from Brown University, where she double majored in public policy and business, entrepreneurship, and organizations.

Marin grew up in Osaka, Japan and Northville, Michigan and in her free time, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, traveling, and discovering new coffee shops.



Simone Ginanneschi

AFFILIATION

Master in Public
Administration
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Bologna, Italy

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Workers' Need for Housing in the
City of Bologna

Simone firmly believes in the values of personal growth and public service, which serve as his moral compass and have consistently shaped the trajectory of his life and career. Guided by these principles, he embarked on a 12-year journey as an Army Officer, leading teams in high-stakes environments ranging from combatant arms to military intelligence. During his service, Simone was deployed to South Lebanon as a United Nations peacekeeper, where he led critical operations that enhanced the safety of more than 1,000 troops. His leadership and data-driven approach enabled senior UN officials to make informed strategic decisions, improving mission outcomes in a volatile region.

Following his commitment to these core values, Simone is now pursuing a Master in Business Administration from the MIT Sloan School of Management and a Master in Public Administration from Harvard Kennedy School. His goal is to reach an even higher level of impact by integrating strategic business insight with public sector innovation. A Fulbright Scholar, Simone holds a Master in Military and Strategic Sciences from the Italian Army Military Academy and the University of Turin, where he developed a solid foundation in political science, leadership, and international relations.

Outside of his professional pursuits, Simone is passionate about weightlifting and mindfulness. He also enjoys open water swimming, trekking, and traveling, embracing both mental and physical challenges as avenues for growth.



Deniann Grant

AFFILIATION

Doctor of Education
Leadership
Harvard Graduate School
of Education

FELLOWSHIP CITY

New Haven, Connecticut

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Integrating Data to Enhance Equity
Through Community Services

Deniann is an experienced educational leader with a background in school improvement, equity-centered policy, and system-level transformation. She has partnered with superintendents and executive teams across Texas, providing strategic guidance and technical assistance to districts navigating federal and state accountability interventions. Her professional journey includes roles at the Texas Education Agency and the Holdsworth Center, where she supported superintendents in addressing their most pressing challenges related to school improvement and talent management.

Deniann is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Educational Leadership at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and history from the University of Florida and a Master in Business Administration from Huston-Tillotson University. As part of her superintendent certification, she is completing a district-level fellowship focused on diagnostic processes, succession planning, and stakeholder engagement.

A proud daughter of Caribbean immigrants, Deniann approaches complex challenges with a systems-thinking lens and believes in the power of data and storytelling to drive meaningful change. In her free time, she enjoys reading and exploring new cities through their food and art scenes.



Elija Kozak

AFFILIATION

Mid-Career Master in Public
Administration
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Santa Clara, California

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Public Engagement and Accountability
for 2026: Superbowl 60 and FIFA
World Cup 26

Elija Kozak is an urban planner and public administration professional passionate about the intersection of city governance and the built environment. Having recently graduated as a Mason Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School, she has over eight years of experience leading urban development strategies at MVRDV, where she focused on public-sector collaboration and international large-scale urban projects. Her work spans research, teaching, and project leadership across Europe and Eurasia, with a recent teaching role at TU Delft's The Why Factory and a research assistant position the Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University. Elija's practice is grounded in her belief that cities are engines of global transformation. She specifically specializes in the influence of governance structures on urban futures.



Hanzhang Lai

AFFILIATION

Master in Design Studies
Harvard Graduate School
of Design

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Nashville, Tennessee

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Community Engagement Strategy
for Transit Improvement Project
Rollout

Hanzhang is a first-year Master in Design Studies candidate in the ecologies domain at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She holds a Bachelor of Architecture and has worked professionally on large-scale cultural, educational, and civic projects. Her academic and professional interests focus on developing multidisciplinary approaches to sustainability and climate resilience, with an emphasis on community-based strategies that elevate marginalized voices.



Shanequa Moore

AFFILIATION

Master in Public
Administration
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

New Rochelle, New York

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Enhancing Community Identity and
Promoting Economic Opportunity
through Data-Driven Insights

Shanequa, a Licensed Master Social Worker, is a mission-driven social entrepreneur and adaptive leadership expert who transforms systemic challenges into practical solutions. As CEO and Founder of I'RAISE Girls & Boys International Corporation, she has spent more than two decades expanding school-based mental health and mentorship programs that now serve thousands of children in under-resourced communities. Moore's pioneering adaptive leadership frameworks—integrating policy innovation with crisis-response strategies—have become blueprints for organizations seeking resilience amid rapid social change. Her work has earned commendations from the New York City Council, the mayor's office, state legislators, and members of Congress for advancing equitable youth services and cross-sector collaboration.

Beyond her executive leadership, Moore teaches social work values and ethics at Touro College, equipping emerging practitioners with tools that blend empathy, integrity, and evidence-based decision-making. Grounded in Christian values of love, justice, and service, she continues to advise public- and private-sector leaders on designing resilient, people-centered systems—and aspires to bring these principles to national policy arenas, ensuring every child and community has the chance to flourish.



Nidhi Nair

AFFILIATION

Master in Public Policy
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Hartford, Connecticut

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Shared Services Implementation
and Data Tracking

Nidhi is a Master in Public Policy candidate at Harvard Kennedy School, focused on expanding pathways to economic opportunity in the United States by helping state and local governments leverage innovative economic development tools. She has conducted comparative policy research on economic mobility systems across the U.S., China, and emerging markets.

Previously, Nidhi was a Schwarzman Scholar in Beijing, where she studied U.S.-China relations, global trade, and Chinese economic policy. She has worked with the Albright Stonebridge Group supporting multilateral efforts to design and implement Special Economic Zones, and held research roles at the Brookings Institution, the UC Berkeley Labor Center, and the Federal Reserve Board of Governors.

She holds a Master of Arts in global affairs from Tsinghua University and a Bachelor of Arts in economics and mathematics-statistics from the University of Connecticut.



Oliver Oglesby

AFFILIATION

Master in Urban Planning/
Master in Architecture
Harvard Graduate School
of Design

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Hobart, Australia

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Climate Action and Transport
Choice with Safe, Accessible,
Active Routes through Hobart

Oliver is a designer, planner, and researcher, originally from Denver, Colorado. He is currently pursuing concurrent Master in Landscape Architecture and Master in Urban Planning degrees at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Previously, he worked on parks, waterfronts, and urban designs as a senior designer and project manager at MVVA in Brooklyn, at Gehl in San Francisco, and at AWP in Paris. With a background in visual arts, Oliver received a Bachelor of Arts in geography, architecture, and environmental studies from Vermont's Middlebury College.



Maria Olumayowa Arogundade

AFFILIATION

Master in Education
Harvard Graduate School
of Education

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Boulder, Colorado

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

City of Boulder Long-Term
Financial Strategy

Maria is a chartered accountant and finance professional, having also completed the first two levels of the Chartered Financial Analyst program. Originally from Nigeria, she began her career at Deloitte, gaining foundational experience in audit and financial services, and later served as head of finance and operations at James Hope University, a donor-funded private university in Nigeria.

At Harvard, Maria is deeply engaged in leadership and community-building. She was selected as a fellow for the David Martin Graduate Student Leadership Forum and serves on the Student Advisory Board for the Education Policy and Analysis Program. She is also a student ambassador for both the Center for International Development and the Advanced Leadership Initiative. As president of the HGSE African Student Organisation, she co-led the planning and execution of the inaugural African Education Dialogue. She also served as co-chair of the HGSE Global Women Initiative. For her exceptional contributions as a student employee supporting the Harvard Physics Department, Maria was nominated for the 2025 Harvard Student Employee of the Year Award.

Maria is passionate about using finance for good and is committed to public service—leveraging her expertise to drive impactful, sustainable solutions across the world. Outside of her academic and professional pursuits, she enjoys singing, attending church, reading books, and watching sports—she's a big NFL fan.



Alejandra Pardini

AFFILIATION

Master in Design Studies
Harvard Graduate School
of Design

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Gary, Indiana

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Gary First Initiative

Alejandra is a licensed architect from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, whose six-year track record spans leading multidisciplinary teams on public infrastructure, community-driven design, and strategic urban interventions. As a founding member of ENCO, she develops off-grid solar solutions that empower self-built settlements. Currently a Master in Design studies candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Alejandra investigates how gender urbanism, design, policy, and public engagement converge to forge equitable infrastructure.



Gene Pozas

AFFILIATION

Master of Science
Harvard T.H. Chan School
of Public Health

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Rosario, Argentina

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Rebuilding the Social Fabric of La
Tablada: Empowering Youth for a
Better Future

Gene Pozas is a Master of Science candidate at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, dedicated to advancing community health through education, advocacy, and applied research. His academic interests center on environmental health, chronic disease prevention, and the social determinants of health, with a focus on translating data into meaningful public health action.

Originally from Miami, Florida, and the first in his family to pursue a graduate degree, Gene discovered his passion for public health while studying at the University of Florida. Through internships and community-based initiatives at the Emerging Pathogens Institute, he became committed to addressing health disparities and promoting wellness at the population level.

Previously, Gene has worked on projects involving health communication, community outreach, and environmental risk analysis. He is particularly interested in leveraging geospatial tools and public health data to inform equitable policies and local interventions, specifically focusing on cancer outcomes. He holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Florida and continues to explore ways to bridge scientific research with grassroots impact and health equity.



Claudia Sachs

AFFILIATION

Master in Design Studies
Harvard Graduate School
of Design

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Laredo, Texas

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Downtown Revitalization:
Vacant to Vibrant

Claudia is an interdisciplinary designer from Costa Rica committed to leveraging design for social impact and systemic change. She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and design with a concentration in marketing from Northeastern University and is currently pursuing a Master in Design Studies at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Her work spans research on climate resilience in rural U.S. communities, the design of the United Nations Development Program's gender equality annual report, and inclusive aging strategies in Bergamo, Italy. She also co-founded Café Tres Monas, a social enterprise that supports Costa Rican women coffee producers.

Claudia is interested in the structural challenges that fragmented governance and weak public-private alliances pose to development and progress in the Global South, particularly in Costa Rica. Outside of school, she enjoys practicing yoga, exploring museums, enjoying a cup of coffee, and trying new local cuisine.



Sameera Salari

AFFILIATION

Master in Public Policy
Harvard Kennedy School

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Cali, Colombia

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Improving Urban Mobility Through
the Use of Data

Sameera is a Master in Public Policy candidate at Harvard Kennedy School, where she focuses on emerging technologies and their global policy implications. She brings over a decade of experience in tech strategy, including leading machine learning and consumer product teams at Meta and serving as founding head of product at an AI startup. Her recent work spans diplomacy, urban innovation, and digital policy, including cybersecurity research at The Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard Kennedy School. Sameera holds a Bachelor of Arts in urban studies from the University of California, Berkeley.



Clarisa Salinas

AFFILIATION

Master in Public Health
Harvard T.H. Chan School
of Public Health

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Denver, Colorado

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

City Wide Goals

Clarisa is from Dallas, Texas and is currently studying at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. She received her Bachelor of Science in nutrition at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas. Before going back to school for a Master in Public Health, Clarisa worked as a care coordinator for a federally qualified health center. There, she connected Hispanic/Latinx immigrants with social programs, such as food, housing, medication, and legal assistance. Clarisa also served as an HIV Care Services consultant for the Texas Department of State Health Services in Austin, Texas. In her free time, Clarisa enjoys playing tennis, attending Boston sporting events, and hanging out with her 15-year-old cat, Benito.



Savalee Tikle

AFFILIATION

Master of Architecture in
Urban Design
Harvard Graduate School
of Design

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Evansville, Indiana

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Evansville Center City Renewal
Project

Savalee is an architect and current student at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. As an architect and urban research practitioner based in Mumbai, she specializes in urban innovations and design paradigms. She previously worked with firms including Perkins Eastman Architects and SE-ARCH Design Studio, Mumbai, and her focus primarily lies in urban design and planning projects with a niche that includes masterplan designs for waterfronts, pedagogical institutions, and private equity developments in India, China, and the U.S.

Grounded with a leaning towards sustainable urbanism and public policy, she has been actively engaged with various fellowships, NGOs, and place-making initiatives that have shaped her perspective towards inclusive urbanism and on-the-ground strategies. As a PUKAR research fellow in India, accredited by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, she led community-based research addressing grassroots issues. She collaborated on place-making interventions in the community in her roles as a LEAP fellow in Mumbai, India, and a YLAC fellow in Delhi, India. She also contributed to policy drafting for canal irrigation development with a member of parliament and engaged in collaborative research on city development, transportation, waste management, poverty, and gender dynamics. Her continued advocacy engagement with YUVA and SWASTH foundations in India has been focused on systemic thinking and fostering resilient urban environments. Through her multifaceted approach, she strives to create positive impacts and promote sustainable, equitable urban futures. Her vision is to channel her efforts into impactful endeavors that resonate across diverse ecosystems, influencing the lives of individuals and the interconnected web of environments they inhabit.



Elmo Tumbokon

AFFILIATION

Master in Urban Planning
Harvard Graduate School
of Design

FELLOWSHIP CITY

Winnipeg, Canada

FELLOWSHIP SCOPE

Resetting the Table: Moving Toward
a Proactive Response to Vacant &
Derelict Homes in Winnipeg, Canada

Elmo Tumbokon is an urbanist with a knack for developing innovative solutions for cities struggling with old problems. From organizing for tenant protections in New York City, to researching housing development models that attend to the racial homeownership gap in Washington, D.C., to solutions engineering SaaS curb management products in San Francisco, to climate resiliency planning in Hawaii, Elmo is committed to expanding what we take for granted.

At Harvard, he is pursuing a Master in Urban Planning where he concentrates on urban analytics and urban design. He is based in New York City and Cambridge.

