



## A Note from the President

Happy Spring!

You may have read or heard about the recent astronomical discovery of a nearby solar system with seven Earth-sized planets, three of which circle their parent star, known as TRAPPIST-1. They are at the right distance for liquid surface water, which means there could be life on those other planets!

This discovery is very important to answering questions such as: How does the Universe work?, How did we get here on earth?, and Are we alone? Our clients on a fairly new project are working to help answer these questions; we are fortunate to be serving as evaluator of a cooperative agreement, *NASA's Universe of Learning*, that Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) in Baltimore has been awarded, along with its four partnering institutions: Chandra X-Ray Center in Cambridge, MA., NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, CA, Infrared Processing and Analysis Center (IPAC) at Caltech in Pasadena, and Sonoma State University, which conducts astrophysics professional learning experiences. These five institutions have been involved in NASA missions and providing outreach to the public about these missions.

Speaking of discoveries, I unearthed a treasure trove of client materials from the past 28 + years, as we recently did a massive sorting of old files during our office space consolidation here at 929 Mass Ave. I feel extremely fortunate to have worked with such an interesting and diverse range of organizations. Some of the many artifacts we've cataloged in the last few weeks are "collaged" above!

Cheers,  
Irene

## Meet Our New Graduate Interns

Each brings a new perspective to GRG

GRG is fortunate to have three terrific graduate interns this semester from Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE).

Originally from Southern California, **Sophie Klimcak** received her B.A. in a Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology degree at Washington University in St. Louis. Currently a Master's student in HGSE's *Mind, Brain, Education* program, she is enjoying learning both educational psychology theory and data analysis skills to evaluate underlying variables within the complex education system. When Sophie is not thinking about the means by which to cultivate and encourage "lifelong learners," she can be found practicing yoga, bookmarking restaurants on Yelp, or planning her next trip to a US National Park.

**Anna Santoleri** will receive her Master's degree from HGSE's *Learning and Teaching* program. Her

coursework has focused on making schooling a means to promote self-awareness and civic engagement in young people. At GRG, she works on the MLEAP study along with her fellow interns, which has furthered her understanding about the extrinsic influences of a student's self-perception, particularly in relation to STEM. She is hoping to work as a Middle or High School Humanities teacher next year. A native of New York City, she loves spending time outside, whether running, hiking, or camping.

A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, **Lauren Agnew** recently moved to Boston from the San Francisco Bay Area for her graduate studies in *Education Policy and Management* at HGSE. She is primarily interested in evaluation as a means to conduct meaningful research and analysis to maximize social impact through responsible, data-informed recommendations. Aside from trying to explore all that New England has to offer, Lauren enjoys attempting to cook in her tiny kitchen and obsessing over every dog she sees.

## *Project Updates*

GRG is excited to be working on some new projects this year! Included in the ranks is an evaluation of the **Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art's Cabinet of Art and Curiosity** exhibit. Some of our intrepid evaluators have already had the opportunity to travel to Hartford to interact with visitors and conduct *talk alongs*, during which visitors have the chance to describe their experience of the exhibit.

We also have seen exciting developments on one of our longest-running projects: the NSF-funded **Massachusetts-Linking Experiences and Pathways (M-LEAP2) Project**. With the sixth and final year of data collection completed, our researchers have been conducting thorough reviews of the rich qualitative data we have from each family of focal student, parent(s), and sibling(s). Working with well over 6,000 variables, it's been a large group effort of GRG staffers and our grad interns pitching in to analyze these data.

## Contact

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