

# WVPH Quarterly Issues and Programs List

## October - December, 2019

**All programs locally produced.**

**Issue: How is our community adapting to local climate and ecological shifts?**

According to the UN, climate change is likely to increase river salinity leading to shortages of drinking water and irrigation, and significant changes in the aquatic ecosystems.

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**Core of the Matter 11/12/19: Salt Water Intrusion - 5:00 PM (0.75 hours)**

Mary Heyns speaks with Dr. David Robinson, a Rutgers professor and climatologist, about the connections between climate change, coastal sinking, and salt water intrusion.

**Core of the Matter 11/17/19: Hurricane Sandy, Seven Years Later - 5:00 PM (1 hour)**

Interview with Dr. Karen O'Neill, an associate professor in the human ecology department at Rutgers. She is also the author of *Rivers By Design: State Power and Origins of U.S. Flood Control* and co-editor of *Katrina's Footprint: Race and Vulnerability in America*. A political and historical sociologist, O'Neill studies how policies on land, water, and hazards change the reach of government, the status of experts, and the well-being of various social groups. They discussed the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, and whether a strategy centered around immediate restoration to a pre-storm infrastructure was actually the best path to go down.

**Core of the Matter 11/5/19: Election Day and Environmental Issues - 5:00 PM (1 hour)**

James Boyle and Mary Heyns discuss the importance of the 2019 election in many local communities, including in Piscataway, which will vote on a ballot measure aiming to bring the town's energy supply to 100 percent renewable energy sources by 2035. They highlight the seven-year anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, and how local-level legislation can better prepare communities for extreme weather events, and make changes that prevent and mitigate future natural disasters.

**Core of the Matter 12/22/19: Care Work is Climate Work - 2:00 PM (2 hours)**

Naomi Klein, Gloria Steinem Chair in Media, Culture, and Feminist Studies, moderated a discussion with four leading organizers in the fields of teaching, nursing, domestic labor, and disability rights. Panelists explored how climate impacts are already changing what it means to be a care worker, and imagined how their sectors should be transformed by and for the Green New Deal.

**Issue: How can students and community members get more involved in politics and make their voices heard?**

In the 2018 midterm elections, youth voter turnout in New Jersey tripled, underscoring a new wave of political participation from millennials and Gen Z.

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**Core of the Matter 11/10/19: New Jersey Election Results - 3:00 PM (0.75 hours)**

Jack Mamiye discusses the recent NJ elections, and the results. He also highlights the level of voter turnout as well as information on registering to vote, vote by mail, and ways to increase voter turnout.

**Core of the Matter 11/3/19: Interview with Professor Elizabeth Matto - 3:00 PM (1 hour)**

Thevuni Athalage interviews Elizabeth Matto, an associate research professor at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers. Also serving as the director of the institute's Center for Youth Political Participation, Professor Matto highlights the different research and action projects she has led in relation to voting and youth participation. They discuss the importance of youth political involvement and the impact that such activism has in past, current, and future elections.

**Issue: How do students at Rutgers view the university's administration?**

The 2019-2020 academic school year at Rutgers marked the highest tuition hike in five years, even after the amount of "golden parachute payouts" to high-level staff and administration has surpassed \$20 million.

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**Core of the Matter 10/8/19: The Firing of Rutgers Football Coach Chris Ash - 5:00 PM (0.75 hours)**

As the university raised tuition rates by 2.9 percent for this academic year, the highest spike in 5 years, Rutgers just opened up the RWJBarnabas Health Athletic Performance Center, a building project that is part of Rutgers Athletics "R Big Ten Build," which utilized nearly \$25 million in tax credits under the Economic Redevelopment and Growth program and more than \$75 million in private donations for new athletic facilities. In 2018, the athletics department received a \$15.2 million subsidy in direct institutional support, one of the largest subsidies out of any university in the entire country, despite the fact that the athletics department regularly reports annual deficits that top over \$1 million. These facts are juxtaposed by the firing of Rutgers football coach Chris Ash, who is expected to receive an \$8.7 million severance package. James Boyle sits down with Rutgers AAUP-AFT President Todd Wolfson about the faculty union's response to this payout, and what systemic changes the union feels should be made.

**Core of the Matter 12/30/19: 2019 in Public Affairs - 1:00 PM (1.25 hours)**

James Boyle and Sophia Pastore discuss 2019 in public affairs, examining some of the top issues--including the Rutgers AAUP-AFT contract campaign, the climate movement on-campus, and the organizing around sexual assault at Rutgers--while also looking at how these stories have changed and developed over the course of the year. The two also highlight what issues may be relevant for the Rutgers and New Brunswick communities in the new year.

**Issue: What issues are students and parents facing within local public education systems?**

While New Jersey consistently ranks in the top 5 states for public education, a 2017 analysis by the Civil Rights Project at UCLA found that NJ is the sixth most segregated state for black students and the seventh most segregated for Latino students.

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**Core of the Matter 10/15/19: The Lincoln Annex School Closing - 5:00 PM (1 hour)**

New Brunswick's Lincoln Annex School, serving roughly 750 children in grades 4-8, may be shut down by the city and sold to Robert Wood Johnson to build a new Rutgers Cancer Institute building. Residents from across the community have expressed concerns about what the future could bring. At this point, the city has announced no contingency plan for the closing of the school. Students may end up in a building over 2 miles away and outside of the fifth ward, in what has become locally known as the warehouse school, a rented warehouse structure that the school district has put to use during school renovations and other projects. If not the warehouse school, Lincoln Annex students could be relocated to the original Lincoln School, a building constructed in 1910 with no central air conditioning, limited technological capacities, and a school that is currently housing just four grade levels. James Boyle talks with Charlie Kratovil of the Fifth and Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association to discuss the strained relationships between the city's largest institutions and its most vulnerable community members.

**Issue: Are free speech rights being threatened or changed in our polarized political environment?**

According to a recent Pew Research Center poll, millennials are more likely than older generations to support government censoring of offensive statements about minorities.

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**Core of the Matter 10/22/19: BDS Movement - 5:00 PM (1 hour)**

James Boyle talks to Ahan Sikri of Students for Justice in Palestine about the controversial reading of P is for Palestine at the Highland Park Library, which was met by hundreds of protestors, some pro-Israel, others pro-Palestine. The conversation also revolved around a resolution that the Highland Park council is expected to pass that explicitly condemns the BDS movement and any critiques of Israel. Sikri also discussed the legal backlash SJP has faced on-campus at Rutgers.