

# The GPEDer

## GRADUATE PROGRAM IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER



### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2025 GPED GRADUATES!

We offer our congratulations to the 15 graduates this year. They represent their home countries of Albania, China, Pakistan, and United States. Our graduates are moving on to making meaningful impacts in their fields with the knowledge gained through their Vanderbilt experience.



### INSIGHT FROM AROUND THE WORLD

This Fall, we welcomed a cohort of students representing Nepal, China, India, South Korea, and the US!





# A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF GPED

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## Andrea Moro

Hello GPED Alumni and Friends!

I am delighted to write to you for the first time as Director of the GPED, a role I stepped into last year. Although I have been in the position since 2024, this is my first opportunity to share a welcome letter with our community, and I am grateful for the chance to connect with new students, alumni, and colleagues.

I would also like to introduce myself briefly. I am an applied economist interested in the economics of discrimination and inequality—issues that remain central to economic research and policy debates. In my spare time, I enjoy reading (I am an enthusiastic James Joyce and Jane Austen reader), watching (too many) TV series, and playing the guitar. Each summer I love to spend time hiking in the Dolomites in Italy, my country of origin, a summer activity I look forward to every year—I'm sharing pictures from my last trip with you.



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# A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF GPED

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## Andrea Moro (continued)

Last August I had the pleasure of visiting Asia and meeting many of you. Hearing about your professional journeys and the impact the GPED has had on your careers was both inspiring and energizing. I will keep you informed of my future travels and will do my best to ensure there are opportunities for us to meet whenever I am in your region.

We recently welcomed a new class of 13 students. Although our cohorts have been smaller since the COVID era—typically below 20 students—we are actively exploring ways to increase enrollment and strengthen recruitment. The program faces increasing competition from similar programs across the United States and abroad—an important reminder of how vital it is for us to evolve strategically. Your advice, support, and insights as alumni are invaluable, and I welcome any suggestions about how we can reach strong candidates around the world.

The broader university is also in a moment of transition. The School of Arts and Science has launched a search for a new dean, and our department is conducting an open search for a new department chair. In the coming months, I look forward to engaging with the new leadership, with faculty, and alumni to discuss how we can strengthen and modernize the GPED curriculum, ensuring it remains relevant in today's academic and professional landscape. Our goal is clear: to prepare our students for success in a rapidly changing world.

As always, Nashville remains welcoming and full of energy—and we would love to see you here. If you find yourself in the area, please stop by to say hello. And as ever, please let us know about your success stories. Your experiences and achievements continue to inspire our students.

I wish you and your families a wonderful year ahead. Thank you for your continued support of the GPED.

Warm regards,  
Andrea Moro



# V REMEMBERING SÜREYYA SERDENGEÇTİ

Süreyya Serdengeçti was a graduate of the GPED in 1986. He began working at the Central Bank of Turkey in 1980, beginning in the Exchange Department's Debt Relief division. After graduating, he served in many managerial roles, eventually working his way to being appointed as the Governor of the Central Bank on March 14, 2001. During his 5 years of governorship, the US dollar exchange rate fell from 1.60 to 1.30 Turkish Lira, the annual inflation rate from 37.51% to 8.15%, and the overnight interest rate from 120% to 13.5%. His term ended on March 14, 2006, he then went on to be a senior lecturer at TOBB Economics and Technology University in the Economics Department until his death on July 26, 2025, at the age of 73.



## CHANGES IN ECONOMICS STAFF



Brooke Talley  
Administrative  
Officer



Tina Soo  
Program  
Coordinator



Sarah Gail  
Tucker  
Program  
Specialist



Bailey Cook  
Administrative  
Manager

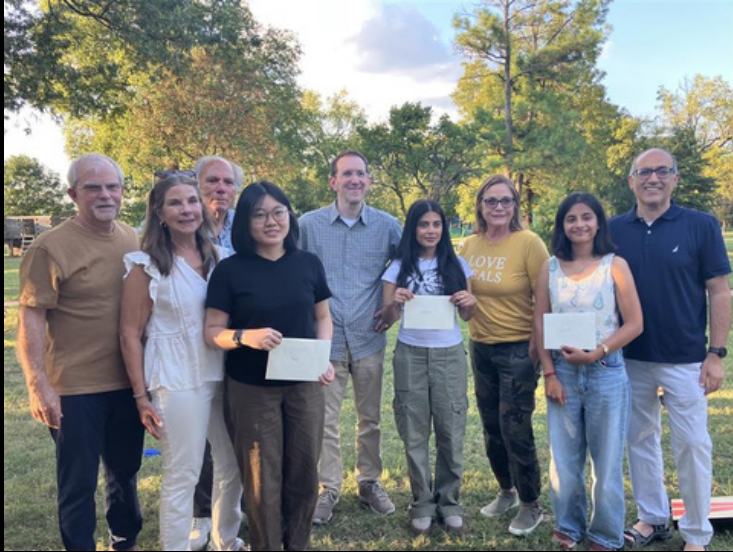


Rachel Wike  
Administrative  
Specialist





# FALL 2025 PICNIC AND AWARD WINNERS



Last September, our annual picnic welcomed the children of the late James Worley, a long time director of the program that the older alumni will certainly remember. Every year, students are awarded a prize from an endowment that was generously gifted by the Worley family and their friends.



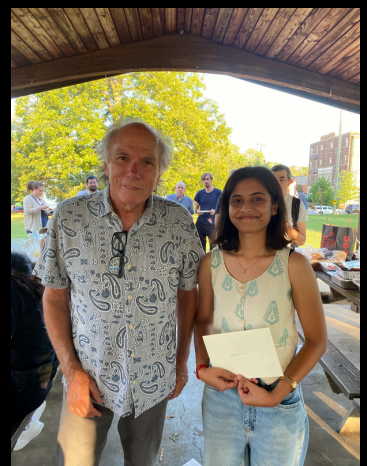
Tong Bai  
Best First  
Year Student  
Worley award  
winner



Anupama Adhikari  
Tuition  
Assistance  
Worley award winner



Harshita Gupta  
Tuition  
Assistance  
Worley award winner



Mouzon and  
Sultan Siddiqi  
Citizenship  
Award Winner  
2025  
**Hannah Kim**





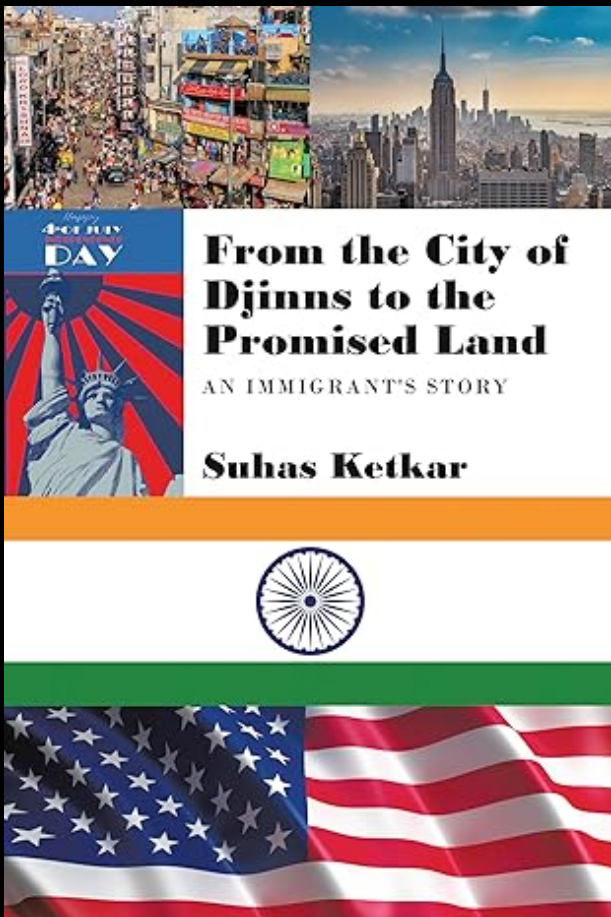
# DISCUSSIONS WITH GPED ALUMNI

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One of the best aspects of the GPED program are the inspiring alumni. We reached out to alumni to hear about their professional and personal achievements along with advice for current GPED students. We were blown away by the outstanding response and were delighted to hear about all their accomplishments. At Vanderbilt we value the importance of fostering a strong sense of community and encourage everyone no matter where they are in the world to keep in touch! Below we have included their insightful responses.

**Suhas Ketkar**

**1973**

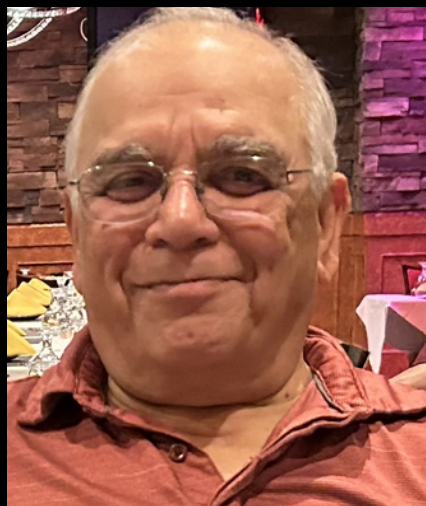


I am happy to inform you that I have just published my memoirs -- *From the City of Djinns to the Promised Land: An Immigrant's Story*. I recount in these memoirs my journey from Sangli on the Krishna River in central India to New York city on the Hudson with many long and short intermittent stops. Highlighted in the memoirs are my 12 plus years of association with Vanderbilt -- as a PhD student (1968-72), as a visiting assistant professor (1975-78), and as a visiting professor (2006-2011), my 25 years in commercial and investment banking in New York, and my many consulting projects with the World Bank. Themes of resilience, cultural identity, adaptation, and intergenerational legacy resonate throughout these memoirs, hopefully creating a stimulating reading experience that touches on universal aspects of human experience. The memoirs are available in soft cover as well as e-book formats on Amazon. Just search by my name: Suhas Ketkar.



# Suhas Ketkar

## (cont)



I have a long association with Vanderbilt University. I consider myself an adopted alumnus of the GPED. I was a visiting assistant professor in the economics department for three years starting in September 1975.

Subsequently, I returned to Vanderbilt as a visiting professor in 2006 after spending 25 years on Wall Street. For two of my five years in Nashville, I served as director of the GPED. Speaking at the 50th anniversary of the GPED in 2007, I

highlighted the contribution of Professor James Worley who served as the GPED director for 25 years, and then recounted Muhammad Yunus' visit to Vanderbilt in 1977. On that visit, Yunus presented a seminar on his incipient thinking on microfinance. On the evening of his seminar, I invited the entire department faculty to meet and greet Yunus at our apartment. Most people left by 9:30 or 10 PM. Mrs. Rosemary Worley concluded that Jim would not be ready

to leave for quite some time and she bailed out around midnight. My wife Kusum retired by 1 AM. Still, Jim, Yunus and I kept on talking. For the first and last time ever, I ran out of all the drinks – alcoholic and non-alcoholic – in my house. Still, our conversation continued. Finally, we decided to call it quits around 6 AM. I concluded my remarks by saying "Jim was so proud of Yunus even then. Imagine how much more proud he would be now!"

The very fact that you are studying in the GPED confirms that you are smart.

Put that smartness to good use. Take advantage of the small class sizes to develop good and close relationships with your professors. Don't shy away from taking challenging courses. Work hard on your thesis to come up with a publishable paper.





**Hanchen Jiang**

**2014**



I would like to share a few exciting updates in the past academic year, as I continue my role as the assistant professor at University of North Texas:

My paper, "Do immigrants equally benefit from rent control?", was published at Real Estate Economics (January 2025).

My paper, "Making the most of coresident data: Credible evidence on intergenerational mobility with sibling correlation", has been published at Journal of Development Economics (September 2025).

My paper, "Does Rent Control Increase Tenant Unemployment?", has been published at Journal of Urban Economics (September 2025).

My favorite memories at Vanderbilt are late-night study sessions in the GPED Lounge, powered by Hattie B's hot chicken!

GPED is a one-of-a-kind family! Don't be shy -- reach out anytime, ask questions, and lean on this community wherever you are!



## Nidhi Adusumalli

2018

I've been working with the United Nations World Food Programme (UN-WFP) in Rome, Italy for the past four years, where I serve as an Impact Evaluation Consultant. My work focuses on evaluating WFP programs related to cash-based transfers, gender equality, and climate resilience using experimental and quasi-experimental methods (primarily RCTs).

On the personal front, I got married to my childhood best friend last year! I will be moving to Toronto, Canada in January 2026, and would love to connect with other alums- please reach out if you're in the area!

Some of my favorite memories at Vanderbilt include the GPED parties, picnics, and especially the trip we took together to the Smoky Mountains.

Living so close to most of the cohort made it easy to get together often. We were always just a few steps away from a good laugh or a deep conversation. It felt like being part of a big, supportive family- something I'll always treasure.

If you're in GPED right now- first off, enjoy it! It's a unique program that gives you a solid foundation in economics while letting you explore real-world issues. As a GPED alum now working in the international development/UN space, my advice would be to embrace the interdisciplinary nature of the program. Take full advantage of the program's global lens and try out different classes, talk to professors, and don't be afraid to dive into areas you know nothing about yet.

Also, reach out to alumni! We've been in your shoes and are happy to share what worked (and what didn't). Internships, research projects, or even just coffee/virtual chats can open unexpected doors.

And finally, don't stress too much about having everything figured out. GPED gives you the skills to pivot, explore and grow. Trust the process, and don't forget to have fun along the way!



## Zacharey Carmichael

**2012**

Zacharey Carmichael graduated from GPED in 2012 and currently serves as a Senior Agriculture Economist in the World Bank Group's Agriculture and Food (AGF) Global Department. He is the technical coordinator for the Crisis Response Window Early Response Financing (CRW ERF) — a US\$1 billion instrument that enables countries to scale up early action in response to emerging food and nutrition security crises.

In addition, Zacharey is a member of the Coordination Unit for the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) and supports the Bank's engagement in both the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC) and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) initiatives.

Specializing in food security crisis risk management and strategic capacity building, he leads a global team advancing the development of Preparedness Plans and crisis risk modeling across more than 30 countries.

Previously, in the World Bank's Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) Department, Zacharey led pilot efforts under the Famine Action Mechanism (FAM), contributed to the Bank's first FCV Strategy, co-led the Global Crisis Risk Platform (GCRP), and helped launch the Lebanon Financing Facility (LFF). Earlier in his career, he worked in the World Bank Treasury's Capital Markets Group on funding and derivatives transactions, and prior to joining the Bank, held roles in interest rate and foreign exchange derivatives at major investment banks.

Zacharey holds a BA and MA in Economics and a Master of Divinity from Vanderbilt University. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Public Policy and Public Administration at George Washington University.

Zacharey's favorite memory at Vanderbilt was meeting Muhammad Yunus in 2012.



# Zacharey Carmichael

## (cont)

We are living through challenging times, especially for those dedicated to the work of international economic development. Hard-won gains are being eroded as global crises multiply and patterns of donor support evolve. Yet the need for effective development—and for skilled, committed professionals in this field—has never been greater.

To GPED students preparing to enter this space: while the job market may feel uncertain, remain focused on strengthening your core, transferable capabilities. These include the capacity for rigorous economic analysis, critical thinking, strong data science proficiency, and the ability to translate evidence into actionable solutions.

The world urgently needs thinkers and practitioners like you—individuals who can combine analytical rigor with moral conviction to confront the defining challenges of our time.





## **Keep in Touch -**

**Send us your news!** New job, house, child, pet, plant? You name it - we want to hear about it! If you have updates on your life post-GPED, including photos you'd like to see printed in the next edition of our newsletter, please email Sarah Tucker at **[sarah.g.tucker@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:sarah.g.tucker@vanderbilt.edu)**.

## **Make a gift to the GPED -**

Support students by  
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name to the GPED:

