

# VIRGINIA LEACH

vleach2@illinois.edu

## EDUCATION

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**University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign** May 2025  
*Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology*

**Drew University, Madison, NJ** May 2020  
*Bachelor of Arts in Sociology*

- Dean's List Fall 2016-May 2020
- Relevant coursework: Sociology Research Methods and Drew Seminar: Community Service
- Honors Thesis Title: Exclusion of the Included: An Analysis of Campus Racial Climate at Predominately White Institutions

## EXPERIENCE

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**Teacher's Assistant** Urbana, IL  
August 2020-Present

- Course: Sociology - Introduction to Poverty
- Grade weekly reading quizzes and Moodle post discussions
- Engage with students on the Moodle site by asking them course-related questions

**National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant Consultant** Urbana, IL  
June 2020-Present

- PI: Dr. Ruby Mendenhall, Department of Sociology, UIUC
- Project Title: STEM-Illinois
- Collect data and map the locations of BIPOC and non-BIPOC owned birth centers
- Prepare art kits for STEM-Illinois participants to practice self-care and healing techniques

**Summer Predoctoral Institute (SPI) Fellow** Urbana, IL  
June-August 2020

- Created interview guides for Black midwives that own birth centers
- Interviewed the owners and asked them how to make birthing centers more accessible
- Presented my findings at the SPI Research Evaluation and Action Plan Symposium

## ACTIVITIES

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**Community of Scholars Fellow** Urbana, IL  
March 2019-Present

- Awarded the opportunity by The UIUC Graduate College to visit and participate in on-campus programs prior to making a graduate school decision.

**Aspire Fellow** Urbana, IL  
July 2019-Present

- Awarded the opportunity by The UIUC Graduate College to visit and apply to the university earlier than other candidates

## SKILLS

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### Software:

- Trained in Microsoft Suite Programs, SPSS, Qualtrics, and Zoom
- Dedoose for Qualitative Research

## REFERENCES

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- Dr. Kevin Leicht                      Professor, Sociology  
Professor, National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA)  
Professor, Business Administration  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA  
[kleicht@illinois.edu](mailto:kleicht@illinois.edu)
- Dr. Ruby Mendenhall                Associate Professor, Sociology  
Associate Professor, African American Studies  
Associate Professor, Urban and Regional Planning  
Associate Professor, Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology  
Associate Professor, National Center for Supercomputing Applications  
Assistant Dean for Diversity and Democratization of Health Innovation,  
Carle Illinois College of Medicine  
Associate Professor, Biomedical and Translational Sciences  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA  
[rubymen@illinois.edu](mailto:rubymen@illinois.edu)