Life Outside the Ivied Walls: History Alumni Return to Share Their Experiences

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On Tuesday, February 10th, the department was proud to welcome back several past MA and PhD recipients for a workshop on the topic of “Careers Outside Academia.” Organized by professor Jordanna Bailkin as part of the department's professionalization program for graduate students, the workshop featured three UW History graduate alumni: Sarah Lindsley, with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Matthew Ouimet, with the U.S. State Department, and Kayla Schott-Bresler, with the Housing Development Consortium of Seattle.

The gathering highlighted what many UW history graduates have long known: that academia is only one of many ways to make a living—and to make an impact in the world—with a degree in history. The panel showcased the accomplishments and diverse career paths achieved by the department's former graduate students. Now these lessons are being passed on to a new generation of UW history students. The nearly twenty graduate students who attended were not only introduced to the range of career options available to them, but they also received practical advice about preparing for a job search in the public or private sector, developing a professional network, and using the university's resources to expand one's employment options.

The Department of History believes in helping its graduate students thrive in a variety of professional contexts. The development of programs to further this goal represents an ongoing commitment. "The department can still do more in terms of supporting students in multiple career paths," said Dr. Bailkin, "but the panel provided a useful starting point for students who are exploring ways to use their extensive research and teaching skills in more than one venue."
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