Mission: The School of Public Affairs and Administration is committed to improving the quality of public and nonprofit service. In a diverse and inclusive community, the mission of the School of Public Affairs and Administrations is to provide learning and discovery opportunities which advance the knowledge and use of professional ethics, best theories, policies, and practices for public and nonprofit organizations in order to create and support societies for respect, liberty, justice and equality.
I am pleased to bring to you the 2019 fall issue of Public SPAAce, A Newsletter for Friends of the Western Michigan University School of Public Affairs and Administration. The purpose is to provide an update on the major events, activities, and accomplishments revolving around the SPAA programs, students and alumni, staff and faculty, and the larger community. All of this has been possible through collective efforts and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this important success.

I would also like to take this opportunity to comment on the mission, vision, and values of SPAA and why all of that matters to where our society stands today. The School website states: (https://wmich.edu/spaa/about):

“The School of Public Affairs and Administration is committed to improving the quality of public and nonprofit service. In a diverse and inclusive community, the mission of the School of Public Affairs and Administration is to provide learning and discovery opportunities which advance the knowledge and use of professional ethics, best theories, policies and practices for public and nonprofit organizations in order to create and support societies of respect, liberty, justice and equality.”

This multi-pronged mission focusing on public and nonprofit service (which in the field of public affairs, administration, and policy is broadly recognized as “public service”) remains at the core of everything that SPAA does in education, research, and service outreach. At a time when an extreme polarization has been a fact of life on almost every single issue in society and polity, it is important to distinguish what is public vs. private and what it means to be in the business of public service. While every issue that we can think of has an individual component, any issue can also rise to the level of public when a collection of individuals (families, groups, organizations, etc.) experience it simultaneously. Religious liberty, food safety, and autonomous vehicles are a few of the myriad of examples where how one encounters the issue becomes broader when it affects a large group of people.

What does this have to do with the idea of public service that SPAA is committed to improve? The answer is everything, since SPAA seeks to shape the intersection of issues like these through its unwavering commitment to the business of education, research, and service outreach. While the issues themselves play out independently from any given actors like SPAA, what they do and how they do it can have an incremental impact on the way public problems evolve, are understood, and can be resolved involving some public or political process. It is through the “learning and discovery opportunities” that SPAA can exert a real impact as its participants including faculty, staff, students, and alumni are able to apply their knowledge and skills in understanding and finding ways to address problems. What is at the center of all of this exercise is the idea of public service as one who focuses on everything private will never be able to fully grasp the veracity of the problem and justify its urgency and relevance. Although defined in some broader sense, the goal of creating and supporting “societies of respect, liberty, justice and equality” requires collective efforts on a continuous basis.

SPAA has also articulated a set of core values on its website: “Common good; Democratic governance; Ethical leadership, decision-making and administrative practice; Advocacy for social justice and liberty; Plurality of ideas and perspectives; Collaborative teaching, research, and service; and Intersection of theory and practice.” The adoption of these values was deliberate as they guide all of SPAA’s mission and activities. These values set out the way SPAA plans and operates whether it is in education, research, or service outreach. They are timeless and transcendental in the sense that what remains the guiding principle does not change over time or across contexts. All of the activities of SPAA have been planned, executed, and evaluated with these guiding values in mind. Students examine these values in every classroom, exercise, or experiential project and seek to find ways to consistently incorporate them for effective and desirable outcomes. This applies irrespective of whether in understanding the origins of today’s complex problems or offering solutions that can improve lives and communities locally, nationally, or globally. After all, we are in the business of learning and discovery and SPAA expects to make its mark in playing a key role in addressing today’s problems by offering one competent student at a time, one high-impact research-study at a time, and one service outreach project at a time.

I hope you will find useful these explanations as well as the updates included in this newsletter. Please also check out WMU SPAA on Facebook or Twitter. I would welcome any ideas or suggestions on improving the way SPAA contributes to solving real problems and connecting with our friends.

With best regards,

Udaya R. Wagle
November 5, 2019
The SPAA Advisory Council

The SPAA Advisory Council is in its second year of formation. Currently, its three officers and eight members are meeting twice a year (Spring, Summer, and Fall) to hear about the updates, initiatives, and accomplishments from SPAA and provide inputs to its plans and activities. The Advisory Council plays a crucial role in connecting SPAA with the larger professional community. It channels inputs from the professional community on the strategic thinking and assessment of SPAA programs and initiatives. The Council is also expected to complete the formation of its 15-member body after the election taking place in 2020 and please let us know if you are interested in serving on this important role or if you have ideas to improve the structure, functions, or visibility of the Council.

**SPAA AC membership (and their representation) for 2018-19**

*Chair:* Matthew Lechel (MPA Alumnus; Kalamazoo Public Library)

*Vice-Chair:* Stella Carneiro-Stevens (MPA Student)

*Secretary:* Mohammed Aljanahi (PhD Student)

*Members:* Dale Howe (PhD Alumnus; Independent Consultant)

Lanna Lewis (MPA Alumna; Kalamazoo Community Foundations)

Jodi Michaels (Colleagues International)

Charles Poole (Undergraduate Student)

Kevin Wordelman (MPA Alumnus; Open Doors Kalamazoo)

Liz Youker (Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra)

Robert Peters (SPAA Faculty)

Udaya Wagle (SPAA Director)
Congratulations to Geoffrey E. Kaituko, MPA alumnus (’06), for receiving the SPAA Outstanding Alumni Award and College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Award for 2019!

Mr. Kaituko is currently the Advisor in the Social Sector Unit of the Office of the President and Special Secretary of the Office of the Deputy President in the Republic of Kenya. His previous professional positions in his home country, Kenya, include Public Policy Advisor and Consultant at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID, 2017-2018), Speaker of the Turkana County Assembly (2013-2017), Project Coordinator at the National Drought Management Authority (2011-2012), District Coordinator at the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (2005 and 2001-2003), and Field Coordinator at K-Rep Development Agency (2000-2001). He holds a professional membership at the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators in United Kingdom and Kenya and the Turkana Professional Association. He is a recipient of the International Fellowship (2002) and Certificate of Excellence for Outstanding Leadership (2013) from the Ford Foundation and a Certificate of Merit for Outstanding Service from the African Studies Association at WMU. His conference, workshop, and training presentations and participation (in Ethiopia, Israel, Kenya, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States) have focused on international development, legislative initiatives, public management, and social development. He is married and has three children and calls himself “a citizen of the world, a son, a father, a spouse, a public servant, a leader, and a scholar.”

Mr. Kaituko’s accomplishments during his life and professional career are outstanding. But his dedication to “improving the quality of public service” and especially helping empower marginalized communities goes to the heart of the academic, research, and service mission of the School of Public Affairs and Administration. Upon completion of the undergraduate degree in 1999, for example, he returned to his home county (equivalent to a state in the US) of Turkana and started to mobilize the primarily illiterate, low-income pastoralists to form “village banks” as a way to gain access to credit in otherwise underserved villages. In these poverty-stricken areas, his community mobilization proved fruitful in achieving many social development objectives: reducing child mortality, increasing school attendance and completion, and alleviating social discord. His service at the National Drought Management Authority focused on building community resilience and introduction of alternative livelihood strategies that increased access to education, health care, clean water and sanitation, nutrition, and technology. Mr. Kaituko is particularly proud of “the empowerment achieved through [his] introduction of mobile schools.”

Further professional advancements only broadened and deepened his commitment to social development and public service. Rather than focusing on particular communities, for example, his elected Speakership at the Turkana Legislature heightened his accountabilities to the entire county. His current role at the President’s and Deputy President’s offices of Kenya has elevated his reach and impact to the national stage.

Geoffrey received a Master of Public Administration degree from WMU in 2006 which he completed as a Fulbright Schlar from the U.S. Government. His other academic degrees include Bachelor of Laws (LLB) (University of South Africa, 2012) and Bachelor of Arts in Government and Arabic (University of Nairobi, 1999).

This award recognizes Mr. Kaituko’s dedication to social development, social justice, and global understanding as a testimony of impact of the School of Public Affairs and Administration. Geoffrey traveled from Nairobi, Kenya, to receive the award at a special college-wide ceremony and participate in the university-wide alumni event on October 11. He also gave a talk on Using MPA Education in Improving the Governance system and Practices: Experience from Kenya as a part of the SPAA Public Service Engagement Series at Sangren Hall on October 10.

**Note to SPAA Alumni:** Please let us know if you would like to nominate yourself or anyone for the 2020 SPAA Outstanding Alumni Award.
There are many changes going on at SPAA and its academic programs. But this update focuses on the ongoing changes in the MPA program exclusively. Our NASPAA reaccreditation process for the MPA program is always a solid learning experience for SPAA faculty. In addition to the design and delivery of programs, this learning comes from students, alumni, potential employers, and other key stakeholders, as well as from external site visit teams. Since receiving our reaccreditation in 2018, the faculty has spent a year redesigning the MPA curriculum to better reflect what we’ve been doing, what students are asking for, and how the field has been changing in general as well as in specific content areas. At this point, we are awaiting final approval of our redesigned MPA curriculum with extensive interaction and inputs from all of our key stakeholders. What’s likely to change? If approved, the MPA program would continue the current four concentrations—Health Care administration, Human Resources Administration, Nonprofit Leadership and Administration, and Public Management—and add a concentration in Public Policy. Each concentration would require 15 credit hours of core courses, 12 credit hours of required concentration courses, six credit hours of electives, and three credit hours of two-part capstone portfolio development course. Pre-career students would continue to need the professional experience as they would in the current curriculum.

Major changes:

1. Much of the content from organizational theory and behavior is moved to other core courses, and the content of those core courses is extensively updated. Thus PADM 6080 disappears from the core curriculum.

2. Public Policy emerges as a new concentration, and is perhaps more academically demanding. Several required courses for this concentration would see our MPA and Ph.D. students in the same classroom. Several current students have already worked through programs of study to adopt this concentration.

3. The program offers greater flexibility as the six credit hours of electives can come from any course at or above the 5000 level including from those that are required in other concentrations when there is applicability to the field of study and the career interest of the student. For example, a Human Resources student who plans to work in the healthcare environment could select healthcare courses or a Nonprofit Leadership student could select a public policy course or advanced quantitative analysis.

4. Exciting new courses include Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Social Policy and Administration, Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement, Third Party Governance and Contracts, Culture Diversity and Social Equity, and more.

5. The project paper is totally redesigned into an experience where the new MPA student is exposed to the five NASPAA core competencies and then throughout the program can update an electronic portfolio to demonstrate achievement in all five competency areas. This can include specific, relevant course assignments, accomplishments at work, community involvement like serving on a nonprofit board, and more. Thus, rather than a final research project, the goal will be a well-developed portfolio which demonstrates competency as well as self-awareness of one’s strengths and weaknesses.

Once these changes are approved, the faculty will start advising current students on the best way to make the most of the new curriculum.

Matthew Mingus, Ph.D.
November 5, 2019

Other Program Updates

1. The hybrid offering of the MPA courses in Lansing will move to Grand Rapids beginning on May 1, 2020.

2. Admissions into the Ph.D. program is currently on hold, with the next group to be admitted for fall 2021.

3. Offerings of the new undergraduate Minor in Nonprofit Administration (revised from the Minor in Nonprofit Leadership) as well as the associated courses have begun in fall 2019.

4. Proposals for the undergraduate Major in Public and Nonprofit Administration and Minor in Public Administration are still under review.
SPAA hosts the Public Service Engagement Series as a way to promote the culture of learning through professional exchange. A typical session occurring on second Wednesday of each month (5 - 6:30 pm) includes a presentation on some contemporary topics or research ideas, projects, or publications, with participants from the SPAA as well as other members of the University and larger community exchanging ideas and offering constructive commentary and feedback.

These events have been well-attended, often leading to meaningful discussion on the given topics. We would like to hear from you if you have ideas for presentations or are interested in attending these sessions!

Here is a list of our past speakers with titles of their presentation:

Mr. Laurence Shaffer, City Manager, City of Portage (November 14, 2018)
Title: Emergency Management Law and the Public Servant

Ms. Jill Roof, Research Associate, Citizens Research Council of Michigan (January 9, 2019)
Title: Regional Government in Michigan: The Need to Approach Local Government Service Delivery and Revenue Raising More Regionally

Mr. John Blue, Senior Deputy Police Chief of Operations, Portage Dept. of Public Safety (February 20, 2019)
Title: Security Planning for Today’s Public Service Leader: Insights and Experiences

Dr. Hal B. Jenson, Professor of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine and Founding Dean of the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine (March 13, 2019)
Title: Directions and Challenges in Medical Education in the U.S.: An Educator's Perspective

Mr. Shayne Kavanagh, Senior Manager of Research at the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) (April 10, 2019)
Title: Responsible Public Budgeting: Emerging Models for Long Term Financial Sustainability

Dr. Richard M. Markoff, Founding President, Damar Foundation (Retired) Indianapolis (September 11, 2019)
Title: Interpersonal Skills, Leadership Lessons, and Million Dollar Gifts

Mr. Geoffrey Kaituko, Special Secretary and Advisor at the Presidency for Social Sector, Office of the Deputy President, Republic of Kenya (October 10, 2019)
Title: Using MPA Education in Improving the governance System and Practices: Experience from Kenya

Mr. Thomas Crothers, Independent Consultant, formerly VP of Finance and Investments, Battle Creek Community Foundation (November 13, 2019)
Title: The Intersection of Tax Policies and the Nonprofit Sector in the U.S.
Congratulations to our Graduates!

NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP MINOR

Here is a list of our graduates with Nonprofit Leadership minor, with their major(s) as well.

**FALL 2018**

Emily Fackler—Theatre Studies  
Rachel Michael—Public Relations  
Annastasia Sampley—Interpersonal Communications  
Olivia Sholtis—General Business

**SPRING 2019**

Courtney Anderson—Sport Management  
Lauren Brya—Social Work  
Lindsey King—Organizational Communication  
D’Asia McDonald—Organizational Communication  
Melinda Church—Social Work  
Camden Pilger—Interpersonal Communication  
Sabryna Cisneros—Public Relations  
Margaret Scannell—Management  
Krystina Edwards—University Studies  
Margaret Snyder—Music Theatre Performance

**SUMMER 2019**

Jesse Novencido—Public History

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA)

Below is a list of MPA graduates and the titles of their final project papers.

**Fall 2018**

**Bennett, Michael J.:** Evaluation and quality improvement of the intentional rounding program.

**Kevil, Breanna:** Hidden consequences of childhood trauma.

**Knowles, Haylee J.:** Assessing grit among past WMU students.

**Patterson, Kelsey:** Bariatric surgery nutrition and fitness program design: Evaluation of a bariatric surgery medical weight management program in southwest Michigan.

**Saleem, Saria:** The analysis of change in Medicare spending per beneficiary score in relation to patient satisfaction and readmission rates.

**Schroeder, Eric R.:** Paying for justice: A study of indigent defense in Michigan.

**Springsteen, Kathleen K.:** Growing food on private property in residential districts: A content analysis of municipal ordinance in Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties.
Spring 2019

Bidigare, Barbara: Exploring the response of nonprofits to rage donations 2016-2018. (Best Project Paper)
Bowden, Charles D.: Departmental crisis: Employee retention.
De La Cruz, Dolores V.: The impact of government sponsored housing projects on the quality of life of low-income people: The case from La Nueva Barquita, Dominican Republic.
Helm, Angela M.: Government sustainability and productivity: Moving forward.
Legaria, Dulce: An analysis of Western Michigan University institutional initiatives for undocumented students.
Simon, Christine: The effect of budget stabilization funds on budget variance.
Studely, Ryan E.: Impact of multimember state legislative districts on race, gender, and partisanship.
Veech, Marta: Prescription opioid growth rates in the state of Michigan: A ten-year analysis.

Summer 2019

Graciano Mota, Alexander: Gender inequality: A case study of economic and hierarchic disparity in the DR government.
Hidayah, Noor: Community satisfaction index 2016 research center for metallurgy and materials Indonesian Institute of Sciences (P2MM-LIPI).
Kellogg, Sasha: A snapshot of online platform usage in nonprofit in Kalamazoo County.
Mahato, Susma: Barriers to access healthcare for undocumented immigrants in the United States of America.
Nirmala, Reny: Indonesia e-government development index (EGDI) and its comparison between southeastern Asia sub-region.
Oswalt, Anna Elaine: Peer mentor support assisting with minority men enrollment into post-secondary education.
Payamps E., Reyna: Hospital accreditation process: Process proposal of the implementation as a medical tourism propeller in the Dominican Republic.
Rosario De Leon, Hector L.: Migration in Latin America - Case study: Dominican Republic.
Sanchez Baez, Emely: Perceived barriers to school-based sexuality education: A case study in the Dominican Republic.
Shepherd, Rhasheda: Separate but equal: The butterfly effect of labor force dissent in equalization and equity.
Suriel Pena, Yuleisy Flor De Liz: Cultural aspects influencing neonatal morality in the Dominican Republic.
Below is a list of PhD graduates and the titles of their dissertation.

**Spring 2019**

**Li Cheng:** Are we globalized? Transformative education and internationalization within NASPAA program.

**Michael (Bud) Norman:** Assessing the cost, quality, and effectiveness of local government training methodologies.

**Tiffany White:** A pilot study: Identifying the characteristics of postsecondary offices of disability services associated with high graduation rates.

**Summer 2019**

**Adel Hasan Ahmed Aladlani:** Governance and economic growth in the Arab world: Evidence from panel data analysis.

**Nanda Ayu Wijayanti:** Banking supervisory and regulatory policy in developing countries: An analysis of determinants and impacts.

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**MPA Scholarship Awards**

Kudos to the following MPA students for their exemplary performance and records, which have enabled them to receive various scholarships and awards during Fall 2018 through Summer 2019

**2018-19 M.P.A. student awards**

- Margaret and Leo Stine Endowed Memorial Scholarship ($4,000; MPA student): **Rhasheda Shepherd**
- Graduate Associates at SPAA: **Kathleen Boylan**
- M.P.A. Scholar Awards ($250 –$500 each):
  - Administration and Delivery of Health Services: **Courtney Juarez**
  - Best Project Paper: **Barbara Bidigare**
  - Emerging Scholar: **Eva Alvarez, Chrystal Ford, Jess Hypatidis, Bridget Kucharski**
  - Organization Theory & Behavior: **Patrick Lopez, Kara Purcell**
  - Public Budgeting: **Shawna Allen, Peter Wills**
  - Public Performance/Info Technology: **Thomas Rossiter**
  - Research Proposal: **Susan Cook, Patti Fergison, Michael Hart**
  - Supervisory Skills/Community Engagement: **Emily Baez-Sanchez**
The following experiential projects conducted by SPAA students since fall 2018 involved organizational data and/or data from observations or interactions from some real-world settings and communication of findings back to the organizations for further action.

1. PADM 6140, Managing Community Growth and Development, is an elective course designed to provide students with an opportunity to apply specific course content in the actual local communities. In its spring 2019 section taught by Dr. McKay in Lansing, students (Dolores Valentina De La Cruz Pena, Demar Drayton, Alexander Graciano Mota, Joshua Lyman, Jose Mendez, and Hector Livio Rosario De Leon visited the cities of Charlotte and Marshall) talked to community leaders like the city manager, and attended local-community government and economic development meetings. They reviewed the community master plan, evaluated possible alternatives for future economic and community growth, and made specific recommendations based upon their observations and course knowledge.

2. Students from the Fall 2019 class of PADM 5870-Fund Raising for Nonprofit Organizations(Eva Alvarez, Jason Andrysiak, Joshua Conley, Alyssa DelVecchio, Tre Goodhue, Allison Gowan, Brittany Hamann, Jess Hypatidis, Whitney Lorenz, Paul Okello, Jill Runkle, Levi Soto, Bronte Spondike, Sarah Thomas, and Jana Zollinger) are preparing Fund Development Plans and additional fundraising materials for the Children's Nature Playscape project (Downtown Kalamazoo) under the faculty supervision of Ms. Heather Jach.

Additionally, the following students completed their internship at various organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Internship Organization</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Internship Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keith Little (MPA)</td>
<td>WMU Unified Clinics</td>
<td>Rachel A. Michael (UG)</td>
<td>The Healing Nest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles W. Poole (UG)</td>
<td>WMU Office of Student</td>
<td>Jesse A. Novencido (UG)</td>
<td>The Heritage Room</td>
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<td>Krystina P. Edwards (UG)</td>
<td>Outfront Kalamazoo</td>
<td>Camden Pilger (UG)</td>
<td>Valley Family Church</td>
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<td>Lindsey King (UG)</td>
<td>YWCA</td>
<td>Margaret J. Snyder (UG)</td>
<td>Dunes Arts Foundation</td>
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<td>D’Asia U. McDonald (UG)</td>
<td>United Way</td>
<td>Chase M. Latka (UG)</td>
<td>Sleeping Bear Dunes</td>
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2019 Annual NASPAA-Batten Student Simulation Competition

The 2019 NASPAA-Batten Student Simulation Competition was hosted by the University of Michigan in February in Ann Arbor. A team of four MPA students from SPAA comprised of Michael James Hart, Dulce Karina Legaria, Emely Sanchez Baez, and Yuleisy Flor De Liz Suriel Pena participated in this competition, which included various simulation exercises focused on global migration in general and the flow of refugees in particular. Here are some reactions from the SPAA students talking about this experience:

“I am honored to have been invited as one of the students representing SPAA. I’ve never participated in a student simulation before. I did like the competition and found it as a great experience. I learned a lot about migration, international relations and most than anything how hard it is for public administrators to take the best decision before unpredicted situations, and besides, aiming to do the greater good with the same decision.”

“Thank you for the opportunity... The competition was a challenging educational experience. I think we worked really well as a group. We even won second place in the practice game, but we barely knew what we were doing then. Along the way we learned how to think outside the box more, so I was satisfied with our final report.”
Pi Alpha Alpha Induction of Students

Pi Alpha Alpha is the only Global Honor Society in the field of Public Affairs and Administration. There are more than 160 chapters located at the member schools of Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) around the world. Pi Alpha Alpha is run by NASPAA: The Global Standard in Public Service Education and is directed by the NASPAA Pi Alpha Alpha Special Ad Hoc Committee.

The purpose of Pi Alpha Alpha is to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship and accomplishments in public affairs and administration. Its objectives including fostering integrity, professionalism, and effective performance promote quality in the education and practice of public affairs and administration. The Pi Alpha Alpha membership identifies those with the highest performance levels in educational programs preparing them for public service careers.

Congratulations to Spring 2019 Inductees

Jeremy R. Byma  
Keith Little  
Yuleisy Suriel Pena

Alexander Graciano Mota  
Susma Mahato

Noor Hidayah  
Hector L. Rosario de Leon

Student and Alumni News and Thoughts

Stacey Fedewa (MPA Alumna, 2014)

“Two pieces of advice that my boss has given me that I think are pieces everyone should take with them during their careers are:

1. “Do the right thing. Then do the next right thing, and the next. When you don’t know what the right thing is then do the hard thing because that’s probably the right thing.” There are so many precarious positions we can find ourselves in during our careers, and this advice has always resonated with me to ensure professional integrity.

2. “Before you click send on an email, imagine that email published on the front page of tomorrow’s paper or hung on a billboard, and then ask yourself if the content needs to be edited.”

The actual verbiage of this advice changes slightly, but the message is always the same picture it on the front page or a billboard as a way to check yourself from sending something inappropriate. On a personal level, to maintain my professionalism I use this same advice in social media too. We all hope to have long and prosperous careers and a quick careless post can come back to haunt you if you’re not cognizant before clicking send.”
R. Tyler Dotson (MPA Alumnus, 2013)

“I can't tell you how often I find myself doing things that I learned as one of your graduate assistants. From the dreaded ‘mail merges’ to working with InDesign, I've been able to not only take my education from WMU but my time in your office with me to build a relatively successful career thus far!

As far as my experience goes in the past few years, I'm currently serving as the City Manager in Watervliet, MI. I've been here since June of 2018!

Before this I was the Economic Development Director in Blissfield, MI for 2.5 years (January 2016 - June 2018). Local Government is a great field where often times you can stay away from partisan gridlock and instead work to make substantial impact in your municipality and really see first hand how your hard work can positively effect your neighbors and fellow residents. It's a very rewarding career path and one that I'm happy I chose to embark on.

My words of wisdom to anyone studying public administration is to network, apply your studies to real life situations you’ve been a part of or have witnessed in the workplace/field of study, and take any/all internships that allow you direct hands on experience. Developing long and sustainable relationships is really key in continuing to learn long after your time at WMU - SPAA while developing a network you can lean on to tackle unique and sometimes complex issues. It always helps to have good people who are willing to help..

Mary Fortney (MPA Alumna, 2014)

“I am just incredibly grateful for my MPA experience, and recommend Western's program all the time! I'm a Program Manager for Disability Network Southwest Michigan. What my MPA has provided me that I'm especially happy with, is it's given me the opportunity to teach at the collegiate level. I teach for the Community and Human Services program for Siena Heights University. Thanks for everything!”

Yolonda D. Lavender (MPA Student)

“In September I started a new chapter as the Grant Program Manager with the Stryker Johnston Foundation. For more information go to strykerjohnstonfoundation.org/our-team”

Melissa Montague (MPA Alumna, 2010)

“I have a new job as the Health Analytics Manager at Senior Care Partners, PACE. I'm super proud of the work that this organization does providing innovative, all inclusive care to the elderly to improve their quality of life. Coming from a hospital system, this opportunity has helped me understand that there are other options for care for seniors. As our healthcare system and population evolves, we need to get innovative with how we address the needs of our communities.”
Dr. McKay provides a variety of services to local communities focused on economic development and community engagement. He has provided cities or township with the resources needed to effectively survey their resident population and obtain valuable feedback from the community on local issues and potential projects that may benefit them. The survey results guide the decision-making process for township boards and city commissions and ensure local citizens are part of the process. In many cases, the survey results have provided further support to key local investments in infrastructure and economic development and increased community satisfaction with their local government.

Dr. McKay has also consulted with city councils and educated them on hiring a city manager with much needed insights on the role of a city manager, the best way to articulate their duties and responsibilities, and how they can coordinate economic development and improve citizen relations and service. His financial analyses have also assisted in making decisions about the affordability of city manager on a full time or part time basis. Sometimes, this has also involved bringing city managers/mayors/council presidents from other localities and exchanging ideas and best practices on how city managers can add value to what cities or localities can do and how they contribute to the quality of services and decisions that they make for residents.

The communities that have received service from Dr. McKay include Marshall, Hastings, Three Rivers, Portage, Kalamazoo, Galesburg, Portland, Charlotte, Odessa Township, and Ross Township.

Welcome New Professional Instructors!

Ms. Sarah Bannon has extensive background in leadership and operation in the context of philanthropy, health, and human services. She is currently teaching Nonprofit Governance (fall 2019) in the MPA program.

Dr. Nancy Bjorklund brings a wealth of experience in budgeting, finance, personnel, and global engagement. She has taught Human Resources Administration (spring and fall 2019) and Planning in NPOs (summer 2019) in the MPA program.

Ms. Heather Jach (MPA Alumna 2006) is an accomplished nonprofit professional with a particular focus on marketing and fundraising. She is currently teaching Fund Raising (fall 2019) in the MPA Program.

Dr. Zhu Jing specializes in the intersection of business and public administration with a particular focus on China. She taught Organizational Theory and Behavior (summer 2019) in the MPA program.
Dr. Matthew Mingus received the Distinguished Teaching Award during WMU's 2019 Academic Convocation. In addition to the two Distinguished Teaching Awards, WMU President Dr. Edward Montgomery presented various university-wide awards honoring this year’s Emerging Scholar and Distinguished Faculty Scholar Awards as well as the Distinguished Service and Make a Difference Awards. The following is a news excerpt from the award program describing Dr. Mingus’ achievements!

“Mingus, professor of public administration and director of the graduate programs, holds doctoral and master’s degrees in public administration from the University of Colorado and University of Victoria, respectively, and a bachelor’s degree in public affairs and speech communications from the University of Denver.

His research, taking him to China, Iraq, and Canada, has increasingly focused on comparative federalism and other models of decentralized administration. In 2005-06, he was the inaugural Fulbright research chair at the University of Ottawa's Centre on Governance, in 2009-10 he served as a senior governance specialist for the U.S. Department of State in Iraq, and in 2013-14 he was a visiting professor at the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China.

His dedication to teaching his graduate students has been monumental during his close to 20 years with WMU.

"He tailored his classes to the learning styles of his students and used creative methods to ensure that the lessons stick," wrote a former student. "This, in my opinion, makes him exceptional and truly distinguished."

He has taught most of the core graduate curriculum in public administration, from the foundations and history of the discipline, to organization theory, to qualitative and quantitative research methods.

"I appreciate the breadth of the material he has offered, his facility with multiple delivery platforms, his willingness to move across related disciplines, the practical experience in the fields that informs his teaching, and his efforts to bring international perspectives to Western," added a colleague.”

Congratulation to Dr. Mingus!


**Schroeter, D.** (2019). Evaluation Competencies, Instruction, and Academic Leadership. Poster at the 2019 *TEACHING AND LEARNING BASH.*


**Wagle, U.R.** (2019). The Role of Research Methods and Data Analysis in Graduate Public Affairs Programs. *Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration* (NASPAA) *Conference*, Los Angeles, CA (October).


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