



Master of Public Administration Northern Kentucky University 2015

The PA Nexus

Welcome to the 2014-15 edition of our MPA newsletter. This is the 9th year of publication for our newsletter. We hope that you find this edition of our newsletter informative and interesting to read. Thanks to Kyle Dorriere (our Graduate Assistant) and Beth DeVantier (MPA Coordinator) for all their hard work in publishing this newsletter. Special thanks to our contributors, who took time from their busy worlds to contribute to this newsletter. Some of you may ask why or how we chose to name this newsletter The PA Nexus. Those of you who graduated from the program around 2006 (the year we started this newsletter) may remember when we asked students and faculty to give us ideas on possible names for the newsletter. We received many excellent ideas, and The PA Nexus was the winner! One cannot overemphasize the creativity that is generated when stakeholders are meaningfully engaged in the decision-making process.

I want to share some excellent news about our MPA program:

Curriculum revisions: Based on our advisory board's feedback and our ongoing conversations with practitioners and students, we have added Public Leadership as a new area of concentration for the MPA program. The program's overarching goal is to prepare future leaders in government and nonprofit organizations. Our program is uniquely positioned to promote that goal, and we have made great strides in that respect. We are proud to see so many of our alumni in leadership roles in their respective agencies.

Student kudos: It is great to see that many of our students are working with faculty on their research projects, presenting at different professional conferences, and also becoming published. For example, during this past spring semester, several MPA students presented at the Midwest Public Affairs Conference (Ft. Wayne, IN) and at the Western Social Science Association Conference (Albuquerque, NM).

Strategic recruitment and publicity: We have actively engaged in a variety of events to share our stories with the community and prospective students. Last May, we had invited several area local, state, and federal agencies, and nonprofits to attend a "meet and greet" session with MPA faculty and students. One of the goals of that session was to further cultivate the program's collaboration with area agencies. This fall, faculty and staff have visited a variety of on-campus upper division classes to inform students about the MPA program and answer questions. We also organized an "MPA Information Session" and invited students from colleges and universities within a 60 miles radius. The event was well attended. We plan to continue our outreach activities.

MPA fall reception and spring banquets: We continue the program's tradition of scheduling a fall reception and a spring banquet. We were fortunate to have excellent speakers at both these events. Wilma L. Javey (Director, US EEOC, Cincinnati Area) was our speaker at the recent fall reception. Wade Williams (VP of Advanced Manufacturing and Business Retention and Expansion for Northern Kentucky Tri-Ed) was our speaker at the spring banquet. These events offer great opportunities for our students for networking and exploring collaboration with our alumni and practitioners.

Upcoming initiatives: We are looking forward to work on several new initiatives in the near future, including revising our NPM certificate curriculum, developing a MPA Minority Student Scholarship Foundation, and exploring the feasibility of offering a Certified Public Managers Program for public administrators in Kentucky. More on all these in our next edition!

As always, we would like to hear your feedback on this newsletter and the program. Our student and alumni feedback has been crucial in making this program a strong and healthy program. We are committed to making this program a premier program, and we cannot do that without your support.

Wish you all a happy new year!

Shamima Ahmed

Chair, Dept. of PSC, CJ, & OL

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Faculty Updates



Dr. Hongmei Wang has been leading two research projects in 2014. One is about *Using Remote Sensing Techniques for Evaluating Honeysuckle Spatial Distribution – A Case Study at Hamilton County Parks, Ohio*. The other is *Mapping Honeysuckle Spatial Distribution by Using High-Resolution Remote Sensing Techniques - A Case Study in Middle Creek Watershed, Boone County, KY*. She presented her research results at the Kentucky GIS Conference in September 2014.

In July 2014, **Dr. Gary Mattson** was reappointed by Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear to the Banklick/Lower Licking River Watershed Council, which acquires environmentally sensitive land and reviews the impact that publicly funded projects have on the watershed. He attended the Kentucky American Planning Association state conference in May, and served on a panel at the Midwest APA conference in early Fall 2014. Dr. Mattson was an invited conference participant on fair lending housing finance practices sponsored by the Bank of Cleveland Federal Reserve in April. He also presented a paper at the national Urban Affairs Association conference in April on small town capital budgeting finance. Dr. Mattson had an article published in the *National Civic Review* on the municipal budgeting and retrenchment policy of Ohio's rural towns.



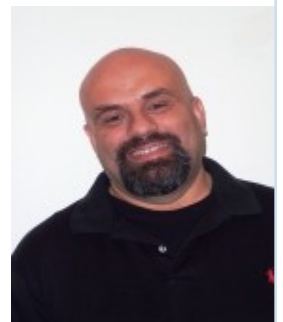
Dr. Shamima Ahmed presented a paper, based on some aspects of her current research on women leadership in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), at the NASPAA conference. In her research, Dr. Ahmed assesses the state of women leadership in NGOs, and the challenges and opportunities that women face as they lead these international agencies. She has also published a paper, titled, *The MPA Capstone Course: Multifaceted Uses and Potentialities* in *Teaching Public Administration* journal.

In April 2014, **Dr. Thomas Lambert** and James Catchen (former MPA Graduate Assistant) presented a paper at the Western Social Sciences Association in Albuquerque, titled "The Impact of Urban Sprawl on Disaster Relief Spending." Professor Lambert also wrote a chapter for a research methods handbook with Dr. Michael Bewley. The chapter is titled "The Use of Quasi-experimental Design in Urban and Regional Policy Research and Political Economy." It will appear in *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Heterodox Economics* from Edward Elgar Publishers.



Dr. Julie Cencula Olberding presented papers at the Midwest Public Affairs Conference (MPAC) in March and the Association for Research of Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) in November. The latter paper, which was co-authored by MPA alumna Whitney Hacker, is under review at the *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*. She is currently working on a book, tentatively entitled *Special Events in an Era of Social Enterprise*, with support from an NKU sabbatical grant. She also served on the NASPAA accreditation site visit team for Texas A&M University and as Vice President of the Seasongood Good Government Foundation. She has presented to various community organizations and groups, including the Cincinnati Bar Association's Nonprofit Governance program.

Dr. Marcos Misis is finishing an article on police stress using qualitative methods. He is also working on a research project with Dr. Michael Bush on fear of terrorism among undergraduate students. Dr. Misis is working on three different projects with MPA students on the topics of border security, fusion centers, and policing and homeland security. He is actively developing a detailed database of domestic terrorist acts in the United States.



Meet New Faculty and Staff

Mr. David Elmer



David Elmer

David Elmer is a 2004 graduate of the NKU MPA Program, the 2007 MPA Outstanding Alumnus of Year, and a current member of the MPA Advisory Board. He is currently an administrator with the Village of Evendale and has more than 18 years local government experience. Mr. Elmer has worked closely with elected officials and staff on preparing, planning and forecasting budgets. During his tenure with one community, he helped increase their total fund balance by \$4 million over eight years without service reductions or layoffs. He will teach Budgeting Techniques and Applications (PAD 511), during the spring semester.

Dr. Khandaker Islam

Dr. Khandaker Islam is a lecturer in Public Administration and Organizational Leadership. He received his Ph.D. in Public Administration from Western Michigan University in April 2014. Dr. Islam received a Master of Public Management (MPM) Degree from Carnegie Mellon University with a double concentration in Public Organization and Human Resources Management. He also received an MBA with a concentration in Marketing. Prior to earning his MPM and MBA degrees, he earned Bachelor and Master degrees in Public Administration from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Dr. Islam is passionate about teaching. He worked for over four years as an Assistant Professor at the department of Public Administration at the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in Public Administration. He also worked as adjunct faculty at the School of Management of George Mason University, VA. Dr. Islam's current research areas are public policy, health policy, leadership in public agency, ethics in organizational leadership, and efficiency building in public agency. Currently, Dr. Islam is working in publishing his Ph.D. dissertation. Prior to coming to the United States, Dr. Islam worked for the Government of Bangladesh and the World Bank country office in Bangladesh as a consultant. He is also a reviewer of *International Journal of Management Theory and Practices*.



Dr. Khandaker Islam

Kyle Dorriere



Kyle Dorriere

Kyle Dorriere is the new graduate assistant for the MPA program and a first-year student. He earned his bachelor's degree in French from Eastern Kentucky University in May 2014. His dream would be to work for the State Department. When he isn't focusing on his studies, he moonlights as a manager at the Highland Heights Skyline on the weekends.

Check out his blog at: <http://nkumpa3.blogspot.com>
dorrierekl@mymail.nku.edu

Community Problem-Solving Across Sectors

By **Deborah A. Johnson**, MPA '07, MPA Advisory Board Member



“Chief Blackwell, I feel very uncomfortable during my morning walk to work when creepy men driving through my neighborhood gawk at me and solicit sex,” I stated to him and his Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) colleagues at a town hall meeting in January 2014. Earlier that day, a young prostitute was gunned down in the middle of McMicken Avenue, the street that I cross, and her killers got away. After this meeting, various stakeholders across sectors came together to successfully combat this complex situation. Their efforts may serve as a template for your own community problem-solving efforts.

The location of concern was an approximate two-mile long stretch of West McMicken Avenue, which had a mix of socio-economics, infrastructure, and political jurisdictions. McMicken offered easy access from Interstate 75 to markets for illegal sex and drugs. Many of the buyers’ vehicle licenses are from Kentucky and Indiana, and many of the prostitutes were from outside of the city, some driven in by their pimps each morning.

Initially, the neighbors condemned the prostitutes and focused efforts on making them go away. But over time, the neighbors noticed that the pimps lurked in the background and pushed the women to exploit their bodies for money. The West McMicken Improvement Association helped change the focus from women who walked the streets to men who solicited the sex – aka “johns.” The association invited different stakeholders to meetings to educate and problem-solve together.

For example, CPD District 5 Neighborhood Liaison Lisa Johnson had been working tirelessly for months, trying to talk prostitutes into rehabilitation. One of the biggest problems was a lack of beds at the Center for Chemical Addictions Treatment (CCAT), where women would first go to detox. She was also mailing “Dear John Letters” to the owners of vehicles photographed by neighbors picking up or dropping off prostitutes in the neighborhood. The letters gave notice of their potential illegal activity.

Another government representative was Cincinnati City Councilmember Yvette Simpson, who had been working with Councilmember Amy Murray to increase penalties for johns. She had also been supporting Ohio State Representative Denise Driehaus to push through various bills to fight trafficking and offer alternate options than incarceration for victims.

Nonprofit organizations included Bethel Union’s Off the Streets program, which offers women involved in prostitution a safe place for recovery and education to become reintegrated into the community. Also, the Salvation Army runs an Anti Human Trafficking program to help women trapped in the prostitution-drug cycle at the local, national and international levels.

Ultimately, the CPD under the leadership of District 1 Captain Michael John planned an initiative, based on Problem Solving through Community Partnerships. He gathered data through statistics to identify street segments, community complaints, and uniform officers’ observations. He directed officers to engage and build relationships with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. He had City maintenance clean up some of the blight. He incorporated social service organizations for housing, health care, treatment, education, and life skills. He planned for police to enforce law, refer women to services, conduct reverse sting operations, and take care of nuisance abatement.

The most public action was placing temporary barricades along McMicken Avenue for three months in the summer of 2014 to disrupt the johns’ access and to help neighbors take back their streets.

Overall, the combined efforts of public, nonprofit and private sector organizations have resulted in a significant reduction in prostitutes on West McMicken. Officer Johnson helped get more than 10 women off the streets, and she seeks to do more. Hamilton County Courts created a prostitution court to offer alternate forms of resolution: prostitutes can choose rehabilitation services, and arrested men attend “john school” and pay higher fines.

Based on this experience, I encourage public administrators to use community problem-solving across sectors, particularly in situations with few resources. In this case, residents, neighborhood groups, social services, government entities, and businesses successfully supported each other in a shared interest. I know it has been successful because I can now walk from my house to the office feeling comfortable and safe.

Alumnus Using Skills on a Global Level

2015

David Caudill (MPA '06 and BA History '85), career member of the United States Foreign Services, shared some of his experiences and encouraged students to consider pursuing a career with the Foreign Services during his visit to campus in September.



Caudill joined the Foreign Service in 2005 after nearly a decade as Clerk of Courts in Clermont County, Ohio. He served from 2005 to 2007 at the U.S. Embassy in Santiago, Chile, where he worked in Consular Affairs. He returned to Washington in 2007 to study the Arabic language and Middle Eastern politics at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center. He served as a Political Officer from 2008 to 2010 at the U.S. Embassy in the Persian Gulf state of Qatar, focusing on human rights, Israeli and Palestinian Affairs, and Qatar's bilateral relationship with Iran.

From 2010 to 2011, Caudill served as the Rule of Law Section Chief at the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Baghdad, Iraq. From 2011 to 2013, David worked at State Department headquarters in Washington as the Political and Military Affairs Officer for Israel in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. There, he worked closely with

the Pentagon, intelligence community, and National Security Staff, as well as with the Israeli Ministry of Defense in Tel Aviv. He returned to Iraq for a second time in 2013 for a one-year assignment as a Political Officer at the Consulate General in Erbil, in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq.

Caudill credits the MPA program for much of his success. "I was attracted to the MPA program at Northern because I wanted a course of study that was intellectually rigorous, delved into the unique challenges that face public sector managers, and was accessible to me as a full-time member of the workforce," he said. "My experience in the MPA program was exceptional - just what I had hoped for - and the knowledge I gained has helped me throughout my Foreign Service career. The MPA program at Northern gave

me that preparation, and has served me well as I have advanced through the ranks."

David's next assignment will be at the U.S. Embassy in Paris, France, where he will be the Action Officer responsible for coordinating Middle East policy with the French government.

Besides his two degrees from NKU, he also holds a Master of Arts in political science (1986) and a law degree (1991) from the University of Cincinnati. He formerly taught political science at both of those universities. He was admitted to practice law in Ohio in 1991 and before the U.S. Supreme Court in 2001. David is a three-time recipient of the State Department's Meritorious Honor Award, and received the Secretary of State's Expeditionary Service Award for his work in Iraq.

"My experience in the MPA program was exceptional...and has served me well as I have advanced through the ranks."

Study Abroad in Costa Rica

During Spring Break 2014, Dr. Whitney McIntyre Miller took a group of students, which included MPA student **Darian Thompson**, to Costa Rica for the Leadership for Peace and Sustainability class. During the eight-day study abroad, the class looked at different concepts and theories for peace and sustainability and applied them through different visits to indigenous communities, sustainable tourism sites, and governmental and non-governmental organizations in and around different cities in Costa Rica.

"Our group also had the opportunity to study for several days at the United Nation's University of Peace (UPEACE) in San Jose with a focus on the Earth Chapter and peace and sustainability in emerging cultures. This study abroad was a very unique experience for me on a personal and professional level," said Thompson. "On a personal level, this study abroad allowed me to interact with people from another county and gave me great insight into their culture and values and how this affects their everyday living. On a professional level, I got to see how different forms of government operate in another county. I also got a better understanding of how social and economic justice can mean different things to different people from different countries. The study abroad to Costa Rica was a very valuable educational experience."

MPA Student Joins Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education

Joshua Tunning, a second year MPA student, has been named to Kentucky's Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE). He is the third NKU student representative to serve on the council since 1997. Tunning was selected by Governor Stephen Beshear over two other candidates: one from the University of Kentucky and the other from the University of Louisville. With these two other powerful players in the mix, he thought his chances of being selected were slim. The governor appoints the council members which includes 13 citizens, one faculty member, and one student member.

In August he traveled to Kentucky State University for his first meeting. "It was definitely a little intimidating at first, especially with how much information is being given to you all at once. Everyone there was extremely welcoming though, so it didn't take long at all to feel welcomed," Tunning said.

The Council on Postsecondary Education coordinates change and improvement in Kentucky's postsecondary education system as directed by the Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997.

"I will definitely be focusing a lot on the outcome based funding proposal. There are a couple of different ways that it could go, so the whole council needs to be prepared on the best way to go about this, as it can and will have major implications on funding for all the universities, Tunning said. "Also, I would like to get more overall student involvement in all this and get them more engaged with these decisions. If you want change, you have to speak and have your voice heard."

Tunning received his bachelor's degree in Political Science from NKU in 2013. He was fairly involved in student government as an undergraduate. He worked on numerous political campaigns during that time. "I love it. I am a political junkie. I try to stay as nonpartisan as possible. It's about working with the government to accomplish things," he said. "When I started at NKU, I had no idea what I wanted to do. But NKU provided opportunities such as internships which provided a new set of skills, and I've grown and become more outgoing."

Tunning is a community organizer for the Brighton Center where he works to engage

residents with local and state government. He also has served with many local organizations such as the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Optimist Club of Newport, Campbell County Drug Free Alliance, and Legacy.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to serve on the CPE. I wouldn't be where I am without NKU, and I am looking forward to see where this all leads," he said. He will serve on the council through June 2015.



My Internship with Boone County Emergency Management

By **Sarah (Carnes) Lucas**

My internship with Boone County Emergency Management over the summer of 2014 was incredible. Going into it, I had no career goals set in stone, no expectations other than credit hours and absolutely no idea that I would fall in love with Emergency Management.

During Spring 2014, I took the Emergency Management class taught by David Moore, and it seemed interesting enough. We learned about natural disasters, terrorism, hazardous materials and all sorts of prevention and mitigation methods. The selling point of a possible internship was the idea that Emergency Management could take me all over the world.

Once the paperwork was filed, I had a meeting with Mark Ihrig, the Director of Emergency Management for Boone County. He discussed possible projects for me to work on and some meet-and-greets with local government officials. It was a bit overwhelming, but sounded exciting nonetheless. My first day consisted of reading Kentucky Revised Statutes to familiarize myself with emergency management policy, which was essential to the project designated to me during my internship: develop the continuity of government plan for Boone County. Although on the tedious side, the reading opened my mind to a world I didn't know existed. I had no idea there was so much written into law about emergency management! After learning about all the partners of the Emergency Management department, all the programs involved and how law was written, it was then that I decided on a career path: Emergency Manager.

Throughout my tenure with Boone County, I rode around with a sheriff's deputy, spent seven hours with the hilarious Shift C crew at the Burlington Fire Department, and participated in volunteer training with the American Red Cross. I helped put together the new phone system at the Emergency Operations Center in the Florence City Building, learned the ins and outs of typical office life with Laura (the office manager) and even helped organize the newly opened teleconferencing room for the department. From organizing binders to restocking the C.E.R.T. van, I learned it all, and I could not have been happier.

My time with Mark, Laura and the rest of the BCEM team was amazing. It is an incredible feeling having a career goal in mind and knowing that my work in the office will help support the county for a long time. The knowledge and experience I obtained over the summer is priceless, and I hope to find a career in the field of Emergency Management thanks to Boone County!

New Jobs and Promotions

2015

Jonathan Arthur—Immigration Services Officer, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (MO)

Jason Barkey—Quality Improvement Coordinator, St. Joseph Orphanage

Abigail Cain—Coordinator, Center of International Education, College of Charleston (SC)

Kayla Camp-Warner—Analyst with the Affordable Housing Group at Sperry Van Ness | Levental Realty

James Catchen—Schools-Based Scholars Coordinator, Northern Kentucky University

Elisha Chamberlain—City Administrative Officer, City of Ludlow

Lisa Desmarais—City Operations Director, City of Covington

David Elmer—Administrative Assistant to the Mayor, Village of Evendale

Cheryl Floyd—Learning Coordinator, General Cable Corporation

Kristen Gasperetti—Program and Development Manager, CincySmiles Foundation

Jeremy Germann—Procurement and Contracting Services, U.S. Department of Energy (ID)

Joe Graf—Accounts Payable Technician, U.S. Army

Elizabeth Fricke—Event and Volunteer Coordinator, Children Inc.

Rachel Heine—Executive Director, Hillard Education Foundation (OH)

Michael Hoff—Assistant to the Provost for Institutional Research and Effectiveness, East Tennessee State University

Brian Houillion—City Manager/Administrator, Fort Mitchell

Laura Johnson—Office Manager, Angel Community Services (TX)

David Johnston—Homicide Commander, Cincinnati Police Department

Rachel Leininger—Director of Recreation and Citizen Engagement, City of Wyoming

Lavonya (Rupert) Leonard—Care Coordination Specialist, Council on Aging of Southwest Ohio

Dustin Lester—Business Development & Project Manager, REDI Cincinnati

Christopher Mackey—Vista Leader, Kentucky Campus Compact

Telly MaGaha—Major and Planned Giving Officer, Freestore Foodbank

Jennifer Patrick—Foundation/Grant Officer, Chatfield College

Michael Price—Data Coordinator, Medpace

James Saunders—Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist, Office of Work Development, Columbus (OH)

Brandie Smith—PACE Executive Director, Kissito Healthcare (VA)

Kristen Sunday—Development Director, Welcome House of Northern Kentucky

Rob Thelen—Edgewood City Councilmember (elected)

Stephanie Togneri—Director of Volunteer Engagement, Freestore Foodbank

Victoria Vogelgesang—Alumnae Relations Director, St. Ursula Academy

Rick Wilson—Grant Writer/Fund Development Specialist, Episcopal Retirement Homes

Spring Awards

In the spring semester of 2014, the MPA program handed out a few awards to current and past students for their achievements in the field.

2014 Award Winners

Scott Gunning—Distinguished MPA Graduate

Brandon Sirbu—Outstanding MPA Student

Stephanie Togneri—Outstanding MPA Student

Wade Williams—Distinguished Alumnus

Fall Banquet

At the annual fall banquet, alumni and students mingled and enjoyed a presentation by Wilma Javey, area director for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Cincinnati.



Dr. Ahmed and Wilma Javey

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Our Mission

The MPA program provides professional managerial, communication, and human relations skills and knowledge in preparation for or advancement in a variety of public sector and related careers. The program advances public sector values of effectiveness, efficiency, honesty, accountability, fairness, diversity and public service in the curriculum, extra-curricular events and speakers, and partnerships with area practitioners through the MPA Advisory Board, the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), and other professional associations and individuals. The goal of the program is to develop competent public service practitioners to serve governments, nonprofit organizations and citizens in the Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati metropolitan region and beyond.

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<http://nkumpa3.blogspot.com>

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