



## MPA NEWSLETTER

### Summer 2017

---

During the past year or so, the NKU MPA program has experienced a few changes in terms of space and faculty. Thankfully, in the most recent months, we've seen a number of positive developments in these areas, making the future look even brighter for faculty, students, and alumni. Here are a few highlights:

- The Founders Hall renovation is ahead of schedule, and the 5th floor is shaping up to be a great space for the MPA program and others in the Department of Political Science, Criminal Justice, and Organizational Leadership. The plan is for the renovated Founders Hall to open in 2018, along with the new Health Innovation Center, which is connected to it.
- Our department has hired a new chairperson – Dr. Karen Miller. She will start in this new role on July 1, bringing a collaborative leadership style and much experience with multidisciplinary units on university campuses.
- Dr. Shamima Ahmed, who has served as our department chair exceptionally well for the past eight years, will return to teach full time in the MPA program.
- The MPA program has received approval to hire a new tenure-track professor, and we will begin the search process in the near future.

### Contact Us

Missy Gish, MPA  
Coordinator  
[gishm@nku.edu](mailto:gishm@nku.edu) /  
859-572-5326  
LA 125  
Highland Heights,  
Ky. 41099

---

### Donate

Make an online donation to the **MPA Foundation** or the **MPA Diversity Scholarship** [here](#).

---

### Connect



[Visit Our Website](#)

Please take a few minutes to read more about recent developments in the MPA program in this newsletter and forward it to colleagues, friends and family who may be interested in the program.

Thanks for your continued support, and have a great summer!

Dr. Julie Olberding, MPA Director

[olberdingj@nku.edu](mailto:olberdingj@nku.edu)

(859) 572-1953



Founders Hall renovation, plaza side



Founders Hall with the new Health Innovation Center, Kenton Drive side

## What's New in the MPA Program?

### **NKU undergrad students now have a more direct pathway to the MPA program**

NKU undergraduate students have been the largest group entering the NKU MPA program and, more generally, pursuing graduate education at NKU. In order to create a more direct pathway for NKU undergrad students, the MPA program has reorganized our core courses into an intermediate and an advanced core, which goes into effect this Fall. The intermediate core consists of the three foundational courses (9 credit hours), which are now offered at the 500-level and can be taken by both grad and undergrad students. The advanced core consists of the six other courses that have been in the core for years (18 credit hours) and can be taken only by grad students.

The intermediate core consists of: Foundations of Public Administration (formerly PAD 600, now PAD 500), Human Resource Management (formerly PAD 601, now PAD 501), and Budgeting Techniques and Applications (PAD 511). For undergrad students who complete one or more of these courses successfully (grade of B or higher), the MPA Admissions Committee can waive them for the MPA degree. A best-case scenario for a student is that the committee waives all three courses, thus reducing the

required credit hours from 39 to 30 for the degree. This will save students time and money, thus making an MPA degree more appealing and manageable.

To emphasize, the core courses for the MPA are the same as they have been for many years (9 courses, 27 credit hours). But we have organized them into an intermediate core (3 courses, 9 hours) and advanced core (6 courses, 18 credits). It should also be noted that we've offered a similar form of these three courses at the undergraduate level for years; they were numbered at the 300- and 400-level.

We will keep you posted on this programmatic change and its impact on interest in the MPA degree and, ultimately, applications and enrollment.

## MPA Events

---

### MPA Awards Banquet

#### **Ryan Adcock accepts award and provides lessons on public leadership**



This year's MPA Awards Banquet was held on Wednesday, April 12 in NKU's Student Union. Ryan Adcock (MPA 2006) was honored with the 2017 Distinguished MPA Alumnus Award. During the past few years, Ryan has helped launch and now leads Cradle Cincinnati, a collaborative aimed at reducing the high infant-mortality rate in Hamilton County.

At the banquet, Ryan gave an informative and interesting presentation on leadership in the public arena. He discussed leading for collective impact to achieve a shared outcome – such as reducing the infant-mortality rate – which involves “pointing hundreds of people in the right direction.” He used the metaphor of map-making, or cartography, to highlight some key lessons about leading for collective impact.

One key lesson is that people only open a map – or follow a leader – if they care about the destination. “People are hungry for vision and will follow someone with a compelling one,” Ryan said. For Cradle Cincinnati, the

“destination” is that the future of Cincinnati and the region depends on the health of today’s moms and babies.

Another lesson is that useful maps are simplified versions of immense amounts of data. As an example, Ryan shared a map of the Washington D.C. rail transit system (see below). It includes information on the four main lines, train stops with neighborhood or street identifiers, and a few noteworthy buildings and landmarks. It does not include every road, building, and landmark in the region.



Relating this lesson to Cradle Cincinnati, more than 50 factors have been linked to infant mortality including age, marital status, income, family history of preterm birth, infection, nutrition, sleep practices, tobacco use, alcohol use, air pollution, and so on. But Ryan and other Cradle leaders decided to focus on three factors (with symbols) – the “three S’s.” They are spacing of at least 18 months between a birth and the next conception (a clock), no smoking during pregnancy (a crossed-out cigarette), and safe sleep for babies in terms of being alone in a crib and on their back (a crib).



We hope that the “mapmaking” by Ryan and other Cradle leaders is successful in reaching the “destination.” As he stated, healthy moms and babies are critical for the future of the city of Cincinnati and our region.

## Student Awards



The MPA program also recognized two students at the Spring Banquet. **Elizabeth Ruwe** was selected as the 2017 Outstanding MPA Student for various reasons, particularly her leadership and advocacy related to education. She works as a Development Associate for Cooperative for Education, which is a nonprofit organization with a mission to break the cycle of poverty in Guatemala.

Elizabeth also served as a student representative on the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE). She wrote op-ed pieces in media outlets advocating the governor and legislators to increase higher education funding in the state.



**Amanda Donelan** was chosen as the 2017 Distinguished MPA Graduate for her long-term career in public service as well as other contributions to the region. She has served in the Covington Police Department for more than 20 years, currently as Patrol Bureau Commander. In this role, she supervises three lieutenants, 10 sergeants and 65 officers.

For her Capstone project, Amanda worked with an organization called Supporting Latino Families that is dedicated to improving communications and service delivery for Spanish-speaking populations in Northern Kentucky. She also has led the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR), which has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for Special Olympics Kentucky.

## Spring 2017 Commencement



Congratulations to the Spring 2017 MPA graduates! Pictured here are (from left to right): Dr. Shamima Ahmed (faculty), Michael Bloemer, Zachary Dorion, Kiaya Lynn, Charles Powell, David Lumsden, Kyle Dorriere, Elizabeth Ruwe, Kathleen Kennedy, Elissa Dixon-Bates, and Dr. Julie Olberding (faculty). Graduates not

pictured are: Fitzgerald Chibamu, Shawn Freeman, Jenny Heizman, and Niki Marengo.

Fall 2017 Commencement for MPA students will be on Saturday, December 16 at BB&T Arena. Mark your calendars to celebrate with us!

### **MPA Graduation Celebration / Summer Party**



The annual MPA Summer Party was held on Thursday, June 8 at Dr. Olberding's house to celebrate our most recent graduates. Students, alumni and faculty ate, drank, and played giant Jenga and cornhole. It was great to celebrate and catch up with everyone! More photos – including action shots of

Jenga – can be found [here](#).

### **MPA Fall Reception**

Mark your calendars for the MPA Fall Reception, which will be held on Thursday, October 12 at 5:30 p.m. We hope to see you there!

### **Regional Awards**

---

A number of NKU MPA alumni, students and instructors were recognized with 2017 Public Administrator of the Year Awards by the American Society of Public Administration's Greater Cincinnati Chapter (ASPA-GCC) in April.



**Elishia Chamberlain** (MPA 2008) was awarded the Early Careerist Award by the ASPA-GCC. For the past three years, Elishia has served as City Administrator for Ludlow, Kentucky, making her one of a few women who serve as a top government manager in Northern Kentucky ... and one of the youngest. She has helped the city move forward with a plan for Ludlow Yards, a mixed-use development at the gateway to the main business district with a design inspired by its railroad heritage.

Earlier in her career, Elishia was the Senior Community Development Specialist at the Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD), where she made important contributions to the Licking River Greenway project. She managed the Licking River Greenway Brownfield Coalition Petroleum Project and the Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund. She applied for various funding opportunities, including five major proposals for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).



**Amanda Donelan** was selected as the 2017 Outstanding Student. The nomination recognized Amanda's excellent academic performance, demonstrated by a very high cumulative GPA, as well as her application of new knowledge and skills to help the broader community.

Professionally, Amanda has served in the Covington Police Department for more than 20 years, currently as Patrol Bureau Commander. In this role, she supervises three lieutenants, 10 sergeants and 65 officers. She is responsible for three shifts of patrols covering 17 square miles of communities ranging from inner-city to rural.



**Daniel Meloy** (MPA 2002) was awarded the Achievement in Innovation for his work on the Colerain Township-Quick Response Team (QRT). This program sends “a team of police officers, firefighters/EMTs and addiction service professionals to the homes of overdose survivors. Between the program’s start in July 2015 and September 2016, more than 250 follow-ups were made to overdose patients with 79 percent of these patients in recovery, and there has been an overall drop in overdoses.”

**Chris Lawson** (MPA 2008) is part of the Pipeline H2O team, which has been selected for the Program Excellence Award. Pipeline H2O is the region’s first water technology accelerator. The program is hosted by The Hamilton Mill, which is "Southwestern Ohio's small business incubator for green, clean, water, digital and advanced manufacturing technologies."

Finally, **Bob Schrage** was selected for the Career Achievement award and **Dina Minneci** for the Individual Contributor award. Both have served as part-time instructors in our MPA program.

### In the Classroom

NKU MPA students in the Capstone class worked very hard during the Spring 2017 semester. Capstone students must complete two major assignments: 1) a portfolio demonstrating their learning in the MPA program, and 2) a research project for which they often inform, assist and advise a government or nonprofit organization. Here are a few examples of the research projects:

- **Kyle Dorriere** conducted a study of citizen engagement in local government in Northern Kentucky, including meeting attendance, citizen surveys, volunteerism, social media, and so on. Kyle’s study is an update to MPA alum Drew Tilow’s Capstone project about five years ago. Kyle, Drew, and Dr. Julie Olberding plan to merge the two studies – especially to examine longitudinal patterns in citizen engagement – and submit it to a peer-reviewed academic journal in the near future.
- **Kathleen Kennedy** developed a guide for local government leaders and managers regarding the recent approval of medical marijuana in the state of Ohio. The guide covers organizational considerations for local governments as employers as well as public policy



considerations in areas such as zoning, road safety, addiction, crime and economic development.

- **David Lumsden** reviewed research in the field of local economic development and examined methods currently utilized in Hamilton County (Cincinnati). In addition, he studied economic development programs in two other metropolitan counties in Ohio – Franklin (Columbus) and Cuyahoga (Cleveland) – and identified those that may be appropriate for Hamilton County.
- **Niki Marengo** partnered with the Hamilton Urban Garden Systems (HUGS), a nonprofit that focuses on “urban agriculture, community gardening, health and nutritional education” in and around the City of Hamilton, Ohio. In particular, Niki developed a plan for strengthening the organization’s volunteer program including recruitment, management and retention. She also created an attractive and informative brochure to help specifically with volunteer recruitment.

In addition, the Capstone class connects students with some of our Advisory Board members on activities to improve their resumes and enhance their interviewing skills. Many thanks to the following board members for their contributions to the professional development sessions this semester:



- **David Elmer**, Village of Evandale, Ohio (pictured here);

- **T.J. White**, Center for Local Governments (pictured here);

- **Rolonda Smith**, Cincinnati Public Schools, Family and Community

Engagement; and

- **Mary Ucci**, NKU's Office of Research, Grants and Contracts.

Alumni Highlights



Many months ago, **Christina Ingle** (MPA 2016) applied for the 2017 Local Government Management Fellowship program. Of 3,000 applicants, Christina was one of about 50 who were selected for a fellowship – a very selective rate of only 1.6%.

Specifically, Christina was offered the position of Management Analyst with the Town of Munster, Indiana. Munster is a "bedroom community" of approximately 23,000 residents in the Chicago metropolitan area. It is home to three lakes, ten parks, 11 miles of bike paths, the Center for Visual and Performing Arts, an innovative public art and sculpture program, the Munster Centennials Vintage Baseball Team, and Three Floyds Brewing Company.

Sponsored by the International City Management Association (ICMA), the Local Government Management Fellowship program is designed to generate interest in public service careers among recent master's program graduates. Many alumni go on to become town, city and county managers.



**Thomas Lankford** (MPA 2016) recently started a new chapter in his career and life, moving from southwestern Ohio to southwestern Oregon. Thomas accepted the position of Trial Court Administrator with the Fifteenth Judicial District of Coos and Curry counties. He is now one of 27 Trial Court Administrators in the state.

His previous position was Associate Director of Warren County Common Pleas Court (Ohio), where he supervised 31 staff members and developed partnerships with community agencies for offender treatment and services. In addition, he wrote, acquired and managed grants totaling \$1.4 million, which included tracking data and developing annual reports. Due to this experience, he taught our Grant Writing class (PAD 623) in Fall 2016.

In his new role in Oregon, Thomas is taking on more duties within the court system, including being the primary person responsible for the court's budget. "This is a great opportunity and a strong reflection, in my opinion, on the many skills I acquired in the Master of Public Administration program at NKU," he recently wrote. "It's mind boggling in a way to think about the

move and this wonderful opportunity that has been afforded to me at my age."

## New Jobs and Promotions

[Matthew Clark](#) (MPA 2011) began a new role as Township Administrator of Clearcreek Township, Ohio.

[Tim Delaney](#) (MPA 2010) has been named the Associate Vice President for Program Services for Volunteers of America (VOA) Mid-States. Tim is now based in Nashville, Tennessee.

[Tyler Gabbard](#) (NPM student) has accepted a position with the Center for the Arts at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California.

[Brian Gilligan](#) (MPA 2007) was selected as the Village Administrator of Golf Manor, Ohio.

[David Lumsden](#) (MPA 2017) is now the Executive Assistant to the Municipal Manager in the Village of Greenhills, Ohio.

[Stephanie Powell](#) has become the Assistant to the General Counsel at Xavier University after many years of working for the Cincinnati Bar Association.

## Connect with us

To stay connected the NKU MPA program, be sure to "like" us on [Facebook](#) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) to stay informed on what is happening with other alumni, the program and job opportunities!

© 2017. Northern Kentucky University. All rights reserved.

[NKU Masters of Public Administration](#)

Nunn Drive, 125 Landrum Academic Center Highland Heights, KY 41099

Phone: 859.572.5326

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)