

THE PA NEXUS

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Changes, connections and competitive advantages

By Dr. Julie Olberding

As many of you know, I assumed the role of MPA director in Fall 2010 because Dr. Shamima Ahmed was selected to serve as chair of the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice, initially on an interim basis and now on a more permanent basis. In her new role, Dr. Ahmed oversees five academic programs – including the MPA program – with nearly 30 full-time faculty and 1,500 students. We are fortunate that Dr. Ahmed will continue to teach in the MPA program and support it in her new role.

I am honored to serve as director of NKU's MPA program, which has made great strides in recent years. A key reason for this progress is the hard work

and accomplishments of our faculty, staff, alumni and students, which are highlighted in this newsletter. In addition to these individual accomplishments, we have worked together to raise the profile of the program by connecting to public administration professionals and groups in Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati.

One key connector has been the Greater Cincinnati Chapter of the American Society of Public Administration. Each year GCC-ASPA hires an intern and, during the past four years, the organization has selected an NKU MPA student – most recently Tracy Wilking. Further, each year GCC-ASPA recognizes an outstanding student at its Public Administrator of the Year Awards Luncheon and, during

the past three years, the organization has chosen an NKU MPA student for this award – most recently Lynne Ausman.

Another way that NKU's MPA program has connected to the "real world" is by inviting practitioners to teach some classes and to speak at special events. Our newest adjunct instructor is Dina Minecci, Township Administrator of Liberty Township, Ohio. She taught Human Resource Management in Fall 2010 and will teach it again in Summer 2011.

Our guest speakers in the past have included noteworthy elected officials and public administrators such as David Pepper, Milton Dohoney and O'dell Owens. The next special event will be the MPA/ASPA dinner on Thursday, February

10 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. in NKU's Student Union. The guest speaker will be Chad Munitz, Executive Vice President for Development at the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC). Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!

Looking toward the future, I envision NKU's MPA program becoming even more a program of excellence and of choice. Some students who live more than 100 miles away have chosen our nonprofit management graduate certificate program. Recently, an MPA student transferred from the University of Kentucky to NKU specifically because of our expertise in nonprofit management. I see these as positive signs of our current

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MPA students Nick Coorey and Jim Kaufman prepare with Dr. Julie Olberding for a presentation to Toyota's Contributions Committee. In Fall 2010, the Resource Acquisition and Management (PAD 621) class partnered with Toyota on the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project. Students evaluated grant applications by 10 nonprofit organizations, conducted site visits and developed funding recommendations for Toyota, which ultimately awarded \$43,000 to these nonprofits.

Dr. Lambert to join faculty

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Thomas Lambert will join NKU's MPA program as an assistant professor, starting in Fall 2011. He has a Ph.D. in Public and Urban Affairs from the University of Louisville and more than 10 years of teaching experience, most recently in the Indiana University system.

Dr. Lambert has taught courses similar to those in NKU's MPA program, including public policy, budgeting, urban economic development, research methods and statistics. He will teach a course in our Homeland Security and Emergency Management area of

concentration and will advise students in this area.

Dr. Lambert has authored more than a dozen articles in academic journals on topics including emergency management services (EMS), enterprise zones, casinos, state taxes and highway expenditures. Further, he has been involved in applied research with various government agencies and nonprofit organizations. For example, he co-authored a report on the costs and benefits of Kentucky's Early Childhood Initiative for the state Department of Education. Welcome Dr. Lambert!

MPA faculty keep busy with research and projects



For the past few years, **Dr. Julie Olberding** has focused on student philanthropy in her teaching, research and service. In Fall 2010, her Resource Acquisition and Management class partnered with Toyota through NKU's Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project. In Summer 2010, Dr. Olberding co-authored *Student Philanthropy: A Handbook for College and University Faculty*, which provides research and best practices related to this pedagogy. She also authored or co-authored two manuscripts on student philanthropy. One manuscript is a quasi-experimental study the impacts of the philanthropy experience on student participants, and the other analyzes the longer-term impacts - one to 10 years after the experience - on alumni.



Dr. Shamima Ahmed presented an article at the Brooklyn Law School's conference on Nongovernment Organizations (NGO's) and their accountability. The article title is "Assessing the Impact of NGOs on International Organizations." Dr. Ahmed has recently published an article (co-author Allison Adams, MPA alum) in *Public Performance & Management Review* on "Web Recruiting in Government Organization: A Case Study of the Northern Kentucky/Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan Region." She participated in a NASPAA site visit team to review the University of San Jose's MPA Program. This past summer, she offered a study abroad course in Bangladesh on "Grameen Bank and Micro-Credit."

During the past year, **Dr. Hongmei Wang** has published one article in the *International Journal of Information Systems and Social Change*. Also, three of her peer-reviewed papers were either presented or accepted for conferences. In addition, Dr. Wang has served the university on the Faculty Benefits Committee and Presidential Policy Committee on Intellectual Property.



Dr. Gary Mattson presented a workshop at the Kentucky Area Planning Association's Spring Conference. It was entitled "Small Town Mini Economic Engines: Key Tools for Main Street Revival." Last winter, Dr. Mattson was invited to be the key speaker for Sherwood Anderson Weekend in Clyde, Ohio. His paper was, "How Would Winnesberg, Ohio Fare in Today's Economy?" Dr. Mattson also served on the academic advisory board for "Taking Sides: Clashing Views for Political Issues."



Dr. Edward Kwon has presented a paper, "Managing a Financial Crisis," at the 51st International Studies Association Annual Convention in New Orleans, LA. He also served as a panel discussant and a panel chair at the ISA Convention. He reviewed two books and an article from scholarly journal and book publishers. Dr. Kwon is working on several research projects on corporate governance and international security. He is serving the advisor of the Model United Nations Student Organization and participated in the AMUN Conference.



Dr. Fred Rhyhart has worked on a pro bono appeal that involves both administrative law and criminal justice. The case is *Gerald Barker v. Commonwealth*. He took it pro bono when the Kentucky Bar Association asked the membership to help the Department of Public Advocacy after budget cuts in 2008. Professor Rhyhart wrote the brief to the Court of Appeals, which decided 2 to 1 for the Commonwealth {2008-CA-01312}. He also wrote the Motion for Discretionary Review to the Kentucky Supreme Court, which granted the motion in August 2010. He wrote the brief to the Kentucky Supreme Court in October 2010.

Learning micro-credit firsthand in Bangladesh

By Lynne Ausman, MPA 2010

MPA students traveled to Bangladesh in July 2010 to learn about micro-credit and social businesses from Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Grameen Bank. In the 1970s, Dr. Mohammad Yunus founded Grameen Bank, an organization that seeks to end poverty by extending small loans to poor people who are often excluded from commercial banks. From Grameen Bank, Dr. Yunus developed a philosophy of social business, in which, instead of building profit, the bottom line is addressing some social problem.

In addition to spending a week in a rural village interviewing borrowers and seeing firsthand how Grameen Bank works, students also visited several Grameen social businesses and sister organizations. Social business is cause-driven. Similar to many businesses, investors contribute start-up money to get the business going. Once it is off the ground and turning a profit, the investors begin to regain their initial investments. Unlike conventional businesses, social businesses do not pay dividends; all profits are reinvested back into the business to ensure sustainability and continued growth. The four social businesses and sister organizations that were particularly impactful for students were Grameen Danone, Grameen Fisheries, Grameen Shakti and Grameen Shikkha.

Grameen Danone is a partnership with Dannon Yogurt. The business makes a high-energy, nutrient packed yogurt that is sold at very low cost to families to help combat childhood malnutrition in Bangladesh. Grameen Fisheries is a partnership with poor families living along the fishing ponds. Grameen provides the expertise and training and families fish the ponds and sell them. The profit is split 50/50. Grameen Shakti, or energy, helps rural families obtain green technology to create electricity. Grameen Shakti also helps families to convert cow waste into a bio-gas that can be used for cooking and to build cooking stoves that are cleaner and safer to operate. Grameen Shikkha, or education, helps children who have to work to obtain a basic education to improve their future employment opportunities. Grameen Shikkha works in both the urban and rural areas of Bangladesh.

"It was an amazing trip and an incredible learning experience," said Tori Ames, MPA student. "We were completely immersed in their culture." MPA students spent a month learning about the different ways that Grameen is working to address poverty in Bangladesh. Students also discussed the various ways that social business can exist in the United States, particularly the Greater Cincinnati region.

To read more about students experiences in Bangladesh, check out their travel blogs:

<http://sowestimeast.wordpress.com>

<http://toriames.wordpress.com>

<http://timd2009.wordpress.com>

<http://www.theblistblog.com>



Lynne Ausman and Tori Ames are surrounded by the village children. Huge throngs of children followed all the students wherever they went. Students lived in the villages for three days to experience firsthand the lending process of Grameen Bank.

Students present at state planning conference

In May 2010, MPA students Craig Bohman and Brian Houillion presented at the Kentucky American Planning Association's Spring Conference at General Butler State Park in Carrollton, Kentucky. The session was entitled "Planning Tools in the Hands of Others: Graduate Students in Public Administration Discuss a Recent Class Project and Their Experience Using Planning Tools as Non-Planners."

The objective of the session was to share the experience of students being exposed to the use of planning tools for the first time and how the knowledge gained may

potentially impact their decisions in future careers as managers in government and non-profit organizations.

This presentation was based upon the paper, "Community Assessment Asset Analysis for Ludlow, Kentucky," which was written by Bohman and Houillion as well as Tracy Power, another MPA student, for the Fall 2009 Planning and Community Development course (PAD 660). It analyzed the current economic situation of the city of Ludlow, Kentucky, through demographic, economic, and workforce development data.



Traveling to the villages in Bangladesh sometimes meant taking a ferry ride. Sitting in the ferry (left to right) are Tim Delaney, Mike Walther and Brandi List.

Alumnus reflects and shares insights

By Deborah Kittner

I have been a proud graduate of the NKU MPA program since 2007. Like many students who enter the program, I brought various educational, professional, and personal experiences with me that would be steadily stretched and refined by the time graduation day arrived. My education included a bachelor's degree in international affairs from NKU and another in French from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). Professionally, I worked in the nonprofit sector at the Global Center of Greater Cincinnati. Prior to that, I had worked at American Airlines and American Express Corporate Travel Management.

Only one year after receiving my MPA, I was accepted in the University of Cincinnati's geography graduate program. Today I am a Ph.D. student and teaching assistant with the intention of graduating in 2012.

Reflecting on my time as an MPA student, I now realize that

the program in its entirety broadened the scope through which I evaluate the world, both locally and globally. The small class sizes afforded direct access to and personalized assistance from professors as well as a supportive environment for quality peer discussion. The curriculum provided new skills and knowledge about the public and government sectors that I had previously never realized. My classmates included working professionals from these unfamiliar places. They added valuable information about issues that we considered in class. It was not only a benefit to hear about important issues in the public sector but also as a means to directly connect and network in this sector.

Frequently, leaders from regional government or nonprofit organizations supplemented our courses by coming to speak. The rigorous and applicable curriculum gave me and my classmates the opportunities to practice

needed skills for the 21st century workplace.

While working at the Global Center and reaching the end of my MPA studies, I decided to change career paths and move into academia. I wanted to take to a new level my international experience of leading faculty development tours to developing countries like Malaysia, Brazil and India along with my skills of designing environmental education tours and producing programs about sustainability. The plan was, and remains, to research and teach about our environment across the private, public and government sectors and across generations and cultures to help make a beneficial change in the world. The MPA opened my awareness to an infrastructure of people, systems and facilities that sometimes are nearly invisible yet essential in maintaining efficient and healthy communities. I intend to finish my Ph.D. and begin teaching in two years time.

As an NKU MPA alumnus, I am also a member of the Advisory Board, currently serving as President. At times the current nine board members are asked to review surveys before they are distributed or listen to future



plans and provide feedback. At other times, we assist in the Capstone course to help students learn to write resumes and practice interviewing. Many board members are quite experienced in hiring and, when we participate in this activity it is well-received.

Personally I take on the role of MPA program advocate and find myself marketing it to friends, community members, and corporate leaders when I have the opportunity.

I would advise current students, or individuals considering pursuit of an MPA degree, to realize the uniqueness and the quality that this training brings to society. Those in the workforce with MPA credentials have what it takes to make a beneficial change.

It is exciting to remain connected to an academic program that trains professionals on how to best operate local governments and nonprofits to make our region an even better place to live.



Chuck Pettit, MPA 1996 and NKU's Superintendent of Building Services, receives congratulations from Sue Moore and Gail Wells after receiving the 2010 Regents Distinguished Service Award at the Fall Staff Appreciation luncheon. Also nominated were Bobby Wince, MPA 2008, and Lauren Franzen, MPA 2006.

Changes

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competitive advantages and of our potential strengths.

Lastly and most importantly for our future, NKU's MPA program is in the early stages of the re-accreditation process through the National Association of School of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). Faculty and staff are busy cumulating and analyzing data and drafting the self-study report. In the near future, we will send a survey to current

students, as part of the ongoing cycle of gathering input from students, alumni and employers in the region. In Fall 2011, a site visit team will come to our campus to review documents and meet with MPA faculty, students, alumni and others. I believe that these activities will help us to identify strategies to leverage our competitive advantages and make our MPA program even better and stronger in the years to come.

Thanks for your support in the past, and best wishes to you in the new year!

Seasongood internship leads to full-time job

By **Dustin Lester, MPA Student**

In Spring 2010, MPA students were informed about the Murray & Agnes Seasongood Good Government Foundation Internship with the City of Cincinnati, Ohio. It is designed to give students who are interested in pursuing careers in public administration or public policy an opportunity to gain valuable experience in a large local government. I was selected as one of five interns for the summer and was placed in the

City of Cincinnati's Department of Planning. Seasongood staff pointed to the work I had completed in Dr. Gary Mattson's Planning and Community Development (PAD 660) class as an important qualification.

The experience in the City of Cincinnati's Department of Planning was rigorous and rewarding. The Department of Planning was, and still is, in the middle of the City's fourth comprehensive plan, Plan

Cincinnati, and ongoing planning project's. My direct supervisor, Chief Planner Margaret Wuerstle, was especially helpful. City staff hold Seasongood Interns with high regard and also expect high performance. I was assigned crucial tasks and was expected to complete them at the most professional standard.

Some of my assignments included writing text amendments to the City's Zoning Code, presenting these text amendments to the Planning Commission, analyzing institutional and neighboring municipal plans, administering request for proposals (RFPs), preparing contracts for the Economic Development and

Housing consultants for Plan Cincinnati, and producing an event for the Director of Planning.

The Seasongood Internship further developed my professionalism as a public administrator and opened up doors for my career. This experience has led me to accept a full-time position working between the City of Cincinnati's Department of Planning and Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati. With hard work, the wisdom gained through our MPA program, and an internship experience, I believe any NKU MPA student will have similar success.

Capstone projects highlighted

Brian Houillion aided in the formation of the Israel Ludlow Historical Society, which is a new organization in Ludlow, Kentucky, dedicated to preserving the genealogy and history of local families as well as the creation of a museum within the city's central business district. Brian helped prepare the bylaws and recruit volunteers for board membership. The society is looking at potentially expanding the museum to encompass railroad history.

Timothy Delaney and Michael Walther conducted two surveys (one online with NKU students and one face-to-face with corporate donors) to identify donors' preferences. They plan to submit the report to the Thomas Adventures in Lifelong Learning (TALL) institute to help the nonprofit develop its future fundraising strategy.

Keisha Stewart and Theresa O'Brien-Turco completed a research project analyzing data and information to identify fundamental reasons for individuals completing or not completing different apprenticeship programs. Towards that end, they analyzed data on 5,986 individuals who participated in various apprenticeship programs between 2004 and 2008 in Southwest Ohio and also conducted several face-to-face interviews.

Lynne Ausman explored public perceptions of *Street Vibes* and its impact on the lives of the vendors. *Street Vibes* is a

newspaper produced by the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless. *Street Vibes* vendors are homeless or formerly homeless or have very low income. They purchase the newspaper from the Homeless Coalition for 25 cents and sell it on the street for a one-dollar donation. The vendor keeps the 75 cents profit for each paper.

Tammy Reams developed a volunteer handbook for the Cincy Blues Society. The nonprofit has approximately 200 volunteers; however, it did not have anyone to develop this handbook due to their very limited resources. The handbook is comprehensive and includes job descriptions for a variety of volunteer opportunities, which Tammy developed after conducting several face-to-face interviews with volunteers.

Sherrie Turner developed a Sole Practice Reference Manual for NKU's Chase College of Law students. The manual provides an overview of pertinent information for graduates who wish to become a sole practitioner. The manual focuses on different topics such as how to: (1) start the process, (2) choose a location, (3) connect to clients, (4) set fees, (5) manage the office and (6) determine how much resources are needed. The manual also included a list of Chase alums who have graciously offered to talk to anyone interested in starting a sole practice.

Students and alumni on the move

Lynne Ausman, Operations Coordinator, Homeless and Runaway Youth Division, Lighthouse Youth Services

Hilary Blakemore, Development Coordinator, NKU's University Development Office

Barbara Bonney, Associate Director, CincySmiles Foundation

Caroline Braden, Coordinator of Undergraduate Programs, NKU's Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice

Matt Clark, Director of Administrative Services, Deerfield Township, OH

Laketa Cole, Chief, Reliability and Service Analysis Division, Public Utilities Commission of Ohio

Nick Coorey, Manager of Emergency Services Support at Liberty Township and Neighborhood Locations, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

Travis Crawford, Program Manager, Delaware Department of Transportation

Tricia Dorman, Volunteer Coordinator, Beech Acres Parenting Center

Brian Houillion, City Administrator, Ludlow, Kentucky

Alex Kraemer, Fellow, Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Glenn Laws, Environmental Technician, Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services

Dustin Lester, Planner/Liaison to the City of Cincinnati's Department of Planning & Buildings and the Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan Sewer District

Jennifer Millisor, Director of Quality Improvement, St. Joseph's Orphanage

Tracy Power, Resource Coordinator, Roberts Paideia Academy

Evelyn Sears, Coordinator of Community Education and Technical Assistance at Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services

Jennifer Stansbury Koenig, Grants Facilitator, NKU's College of Education and Human Services

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MPA Alumna Evelyn Sears poses with Jeb Bush, former governor of Florida, during the NKU Alumni Lecture Series reception in October 2010. Evelyn serves on NKU's Alumni Board.

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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.