

THE MPA NETWORK

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EASTERN
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Newsletter of the
Master of Public
Administration
Program at Eastern
Michigan University



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The MPA Network is published biannually by the Department of Political Science at EMU to inform MPA alumni, current students, public officials, and academics about the activities of the MPA program and its graduates.

CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHT STUDENTS GAIN APPLIED FUNDRAISING EXPERIENCE AND INSIGHT

Students enrolled in Dr. Tucker Staley's PLSC 606 (Fundraising for Nonprofits) course this fall developed a comprehensive fund development plan for the EMU MPA Program. "At the end of the semester, not only will the students have gained applied fundraising experience, but the MPA program will also have an established plan to raise additional revenues to put toward increasing learning opportunities for our students," Dr. Staley explained.

"All assignments in this course are designed to reflect the type of work that professional fundraisers would actually be engaged in," he continued. "The students are analyzing the program's readiness to engage in fundraising, establishing fundraising goals and objectives, preparing cases for support, conducting prospect research, establishing plans for diversified revenue streams (donations, grants, earned income), determining staffing and time requirements to raise revenues, and creating an evaluation procedure to help gauge the progress and success of our fundraising efforts."



Phillis Webb,
MPA Student

For many students, this course broadened their notion of fundraising. "Taking this course has really showed me that it is way more complexed than just asking individuals for money," said Phillis

Webb, a second-year MPA student. "There has to be a purpose, a meaning behind it, and a systematic approach to either new donors or long-time donors."

Vanessa Jackson, a nonprofit management graduate certificate student, has gained more confidence and knowledge of how to build a fundraising plan. "Before the nonprofit fundraising class, the thought of asking for donations was a bit intimidating for me," said Ms. Jackson. She said she has now developed skills in donor relationship building, cultivation, solicitation, and good

stewardship, which she can use in her current nonprofit position. "This class helped me see that the process of fundraising is helping others connect an existing interest or passion directly to a cause or mission. I believe if I approach fundraising from this viewpoint, it will be much easier to meet with potential donors," Ms. Jackson shared.

As a structured learning experience, this course gave students the opportunity to practice the skills they will use in their career. Juliane Vogl, a first-year MPA student, described how developing the fundraising plan has been helpful with her current graduate assistantship with EMU's Engage office. "I will also be using the comprehensive fundraising plan as a portfolio item when I go to interview at various agencies to show them the work that I am capable of completing," Ms. Vogl added.

The students also valued guest speakers coming to their class to talk about their current careers in fundraising. "That has also been instrumental because it not only gives us first-hand information in the field but is also providing us with a way to connect/network with individuals in the field," said Ms. Vogl.

"Before taking this class, I did not know that I could do fundraising as a profession," Ms. Vogl shared. "This has changed as I am now working towards a career goal as a director of development for a university or a nonprofit organization!"



Vanessa Jackson,
Graduate
Certificate
Student



Juliane Vogl,
MPA Student

A CLOSER LOOK: ALFREDA ROOKS

2006 EMU MPA Alumna

Alfreda Rooks is the Director of Community Health Services and Program for Multicultural Health for Michigan Medicine at the University of Michigan.

In her role with Community Health Services (CHS), Ms. Rooks coordinates and leads the programs that provide services to the community. There is a large number of programs that span all age groups and across counties, such as the Housing Bureau for Seniors, the Ann Arbor Meals on Wheels Program, the Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools, as well as language assistance for

those with limited English proficiency or those who are hard of hearing. Ms. Rooks has helped to create a culture that focuses on considering all those in the community as a part of Michigan Medicine. Through the community work, CHS helps to ensure that community members have a high quality of life, whether or not they visit Michigan Medicine. The broad lens provided by the MPA program helped to foster the holistic approach to community work practiced under Ms. Rooks' leadership.

The Program for Multicultural Health creates space for the development and advocacy of culturally responsive programs and services that are respectful and receptive to the needs of diverse populations. **Given the vast and alarming health inequities, it is essential to build awareness of the impact culture and health have on overall well-being.** The program's goal is to empower community and health care organizations to develop safe, effective, and person-centered services.

Ms. Rooks' time in the MPA program helped to provide her with the theory and hands-on knowledge that is needed when critically thinking about problems and solutions. **The MPA program laid a solid foundation for her and helped to elevate her to her current position. She especially found the practical skills gained during budgeting and statistics courses have served her well in her career.** They provided her with the skills to understand the meaning behind numbers, and the skills learned from other courses offered her the ability to use them in creating solutions that are successful and innovative.

“ I love my job. I have the ability to see the impact, but also be the voice for the community. ”



EMU MPA ADVISORY BOARD

Nicolette Bateson, CFO/Treasurer, Great Lakes Water Authority

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EMU TO COLLABORATE WITH CITY OF PLYMOUTH ON A COMMUNITY SURVEY



Dr. Gregory Plagens

Local governments get community feedback continuously. Phone calls to administrators, e-mails, informal feedback at community events, and comments during open microphone portions of public meetings are all common. In an effort to supplement this feedback and to gauge community priorities and sentiment more systematically, the City of Plymouth is working with EMU Associate Professor Gregory Plagens to develop and implement a community survey.

The survey project is currently in the planning stages. Prof. Plagens and graduate assistant Andrea Martinovska are assembling and sharing potential questions with Plymouth Economic Development Director and 2006 EMU MPA

alumnus John Buzuvis. Mr. Buzuvis and 2017 EMU MPA alumna Greta Bolhuis, assistant community development director, are organizing city addresses that will be used to randomly select residents to participate in the survey. The project, anticipated to be completed in the first half of 2019, will use a random sample of residents in an effort to keep the costs of the survey project down.

Dr. Plagens and Ms. Martinovska will work to get surveys printed and distributed, as well as to develop an online completion option. Once the data are collected and analyzed, a summary report of findings will be prepared and presented to city officials. If the project proves to meet the needs of the city, it may be continued in future years. The systematic survey will give city leaders another feedback mechanism for understanding the priorities and sentiments of residents, and it will contribute to Ms. Martinovska's education and EMU's mission of serving the community.

FACULTY RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



DR. JEFFREY BERNSTEIN

Professor Jeffrey Bernstein will be doing the keynote address at the SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) Academy Conference in May 2019, at the University of Findlay. He will speak on "Going Meta' by Talking about Teaching. Rest assured, participants will be asked not to operate heavy machinery for two hours after his talk." His article "Unifying SoTL Methodology: Internal and External Validity" was published in *Teaching and Learning Inquiry* in 2018.



DR. TUCKER STALEY

Professor Tucker Staley had an article published over the summer in *State and Local Government Review*, "The Impact of Tax and Expenditure Limitations on Municipal Revenue Volatility."

Visit the Political Science Department website to learn more about our faculty: www.emich.edu/polisci

STUDENTS ON THE MOVE: FEATURED INTERNSHIPS

Ian Hatch is an MPA student who is currently the City Management Fellow in the City Manager's Office in Royal Oak, MI.

In his internship, he has coordinated with the U.S. Census Bureau to update census address lists and city parcel/tract organization using GIS software. In order to form the Complete Count



Committee, he also drafted a resolution. Both aspects of this project have permitted him to utilize city resources to broaden his understanding of the various organizational streams involved in public sector employment.

Another project has been to formulate a policy to implement the use of uniform

garbage bins for Royal Oak residents. This project required analysis of city ordinances, budgetary constraints, and interdepartmental relationships and objectives. With this project, Mr. Hatch

“The MPA Program at EMU offers students the opportunity to gain a broad understanding of all the various factors that contribute to a career in public administration. Understanding public budgeting systems, policy formulation and even politics at the local level all contribute to a well-rounded approach to a public sector career.”

was given the chance to interact with other communities in the region to determine the feasibility of this endeavor, which offered the opportunity to create professional contacts in numerous Southeast Michigan communities.

The Fellowship experience has been

incredibly beneficial to his academic career at EMU. While working in Royal Oak, he has experienced the application of classroom theory in a hands-on environment. Daily issues and constraints discussed in classes present themselves to administrative employees. Witnessing how civil servants navigate the sometimes-tumultuous intersections of resident, stakeholder, and state and federal interests has really aided in his understanding of key public administration concepts and strategies.

Upon graduation in 2019, Mr. Hatch hopes to apply the skills he has developed in school and in Royal Oak to create a positive, lasting impact on Michigan communities.

Johnna Thompson is an MPA student currently interning at the Detroit City Council in Council President Brenda Jones' Office, where she is the Community Relations and Constituent Concerns Intern.

She attends various neighborhood block club, legislative, and community events and meetings throughout the City of Detroit, presents updates from the Council President's Office, and



promotes upcoming events. If various groups or individuals have questions regarding what is going on within the City of Detroit in respect to events, policies, and meetings, Ms. Thompson assists by giving them the updates they need. If she is unable to answer their question,

she refers them to the Community Relations Manager and the Public Policy Analyst for the Office.

Being an intern for Council President Brenda Jones has been very helpful. By having this internship, Ms. Thompson is able to gain experience within the local government field. She also has been

“Your experience is what you make of it.’ As an intern, if you want to gain knowledge and have a good experience, you can! Ask as many questions as you can, and meet as many individuals within the company/organization as you can!”

able to gain exposure by attending various meetings and events within the community. She has various opportunities to meet city officials and passionate residents of the city.

This internship relates to public

administration because it is within the public sector. It is important for public administrators to have good problem solving skills within the organization. “Various problems will be reported to me as an intern from individuals within the community,” Ms. Thompson explained. “It is extremely important for me to gather research to help the individual

with each problem and follow up with each of them to ensure that they have the tools and the resources to solve their problem.”

Ms. Thompson recommends that MPA students who are not currently within the nonprofit or local government field should apply for an internship to gain experience. A majority of employers are recruiting and hiring individuals that obtain specific skills in correlation to the jobs that a student will apply for.

Do you have internship or job openings at your agency?

Feel free to send them to rsoliven@emich.edu, and we would be happy to share them with our students.

FALL STUDENT EVENTS



Students at the New Student Orientation

Students and faculty get to know each other at the New MPA Student Orientation

On September 9, 2018, the MPA program hosted a social as part of the orientation for new MPA students. The students had a chance to meet each other and the faculty members. It was a beneficial time for students to gather information, contacts, and knowledge about the program. For example, students got the chance to hear about upcoming events that the Political Science Department is preparing for this academic year. Also, the social orientation helped to distribute information about the scholarships, internships, and programs, which is information

that sometimes students miss. It was an easy way to stimulate interest and ideas in the students' minds.

Besides the official program of the orientation, the event also offered fun activities that helped to break away nervousness and initial shyness. The fun afternoon was enriched by a delicious lunch that made everyone full and satisfied that even the rainy weather did not matter anymore.

This was the first time a social orientation like this was held, and there were positive reactions from faculty and students. The program hopes to make this a tradition. Many thanks to MPA Coordinator Rose Jindal, Associate Professor Barbara Patrick, Department Head David Klein, Graduate Assistant Heather Charles, and all faculty and students who assisted with the planning and execution of this successful event.



Faculty and students enjoyed playing cornhole at the new student orientation.



What is Public Administration? Event

The Political Science Department increased the visibility of public service careers with a "What is Public Administration?" event on October 1, 2018. A graduate of our MPA program, a graduate from our political science undergraduate program, and two current MPA students spoke to undergraduate and graduate students about their education and public service career experiences. The advice the panelists shared sparked interest in the field of public and nonprofit administration.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FALL 2017 - SUMMER 2018 GRADUATES

- Jessica Carr
- Jennifer Fansler
- Dalton Floyd
- Melanie Hicks
- Miranda Jenkins
- Christina Kendziora
- Marnie Michel
- Amelia Rodgers
- Carlos Rodriguez
- Brian Rombalski
- Sabrina Saeidifar
- Daniel Stoltman
- Ellen Taylor
- Alexa Timmreck
- Ebony Walls
- Dustin Luke Yates

ALUMNI NEWS

Nicolette Bateson ('12) was recognized as one of Crain's Notable Women in Finance 2018. Nickie is the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Great Lakes Water Authority.

David Behen ('96) was appointed to the Western Michigan University Board of Trustees by Gov. Rick Snyder in October 2018. Behen is the Vice President and Chief Information Officer of LA-Z-BOY.

Aaron Desentz ('13) was appointed as the Eaton Rapids City Manager in March 2018. Prior to this position, he was the City Manager in Leslie, MI, as well as the Village Administrator of Shelby, MI.

Christopher Preston ('17) works as a Treasury Officer with the Michigan Department of Treasury. He is also a Real Estate Agent and Broker with Keller Williams Home.

Patricia Rayl ('12) was recently named Village Manager of Colon, MI. She had previously served as Deputy Treasurer for Blackman Township and City Administrator of Auburn, MI.

Thomas Skrobola ('99) was recently named Finance Director for the City of Toledo, OH. He had previously served as Financial Analyst Manager for the City of Detroit, MI, and CFO for the City of Kalamazoo, MI.

ALUMNI CHAPTER RECOGNIZED



On November 10, 2018, the EMU Master of Public Administration Alumni Chapter was recognized as a Chapter of Excellence by the EMU Alumni Association for our commitment to developing our chapter, building relationships with our alumni, and supporting the university.

Update Your Contact & Career Information

Do we have your updated contact and career information? Do you have news you would like to share with us? Would you like to be more involved in the EMU MPA Program? Let us know by completing our online [alumni contact form](#).

MAKE A GIFT *and help our program grow*

If you would like to give back to the MPA program, please consider making a contribution to the [MPA Program Support Fund](#), which supports student and alumni programming. The [Joe Ohren Student Internship Fund](#) supports students who are doing an unpaid internship for academic credit. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Donations can be made online: www.emich.edu/polisci/donate

Please mail contributions to Eastern Michigan University Foundation, 112 Welch Hall, 850 W. Cross St., Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Please make checks payable to "Eastern Michigan University" and designate "MPA Development Fund" on your checks to ensure your contribution will go to the MPA program.

Thank you for your support!

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