Diversity in Public Administration

by Whitney Harris ’15

As the US population has become more diverse, so has its workforce, including the public sector. “People expect their government to reflect what is good and right about society,” said MPA faculty member Leisha DeHart-Davis, “and to represent the communities that they serve.”

The Carolina MPA program is taking steps to address this evolution. DeHart-Davis instituted a new course in 2013, Diversity in Public Administration, to help students attain a better grasp on the challenges they are likely to face in the field. In one assignment, students were asked to analyze four components of the MPA program’s diversity efforts: curriculum and the classroom experience, student experience, outreach and recruitment, and standards and values.

The students produced a Strategic Diversity Plan, which was presented to MPA faculty in March 2014. The plan includes notes of best practices and both short- and long-term recommendations for improving diversity in the program.

“‘It’s important to have diversity in the program and to be challenged in your thinking in the classroom because you will be challenged in life.’”

— Joy Jackson ’09, MPA@UNC Admissions Director

Program faculty and staff have drafted the Carolina MPA Philosophy on Diversity and Inclusion, which will be available on a new diversity and inclusion section of the MPA website. The web section includes an extensive list of campus resources and professional organizations that serve and represent our varied communities.

DeHart-Davis, fellow faculty members Margaret Henderson and Kim Nelson, and alumna Carla Davis-Castro ’14 organized an event on June 6, 2014, titled Engaging Women in Public Service, at UNC’s Friday Center. The room was filled to capacity with public officials from across the state, including many MPA alumni. A second event will be held in summer 2015 (see sidebar on page 3).

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“I wouldn’t have stayed here for all these years if it weren’t a really special program. I hope that when students graduate and leave, they’ll remember it as fondly as I do.”

— Jean Coble
I am thrilled to report that last summer we successfully recruited the largest incoming class of students in the history of the program. Sixty-eight new students joined the MPA program for fall 2014 (28 on-campus students and 40 online students). This growth, predicted to continue, means that our program will have a greater impact on more communities and organizations through an increased number of Carolina-trained public service leaders.

An important part of that training is the required professional work experience (PWE). I cannot count the number of times I hear alumni reference the importance of their PWEs when talking about their careers in public service. Many cite successful career-long mentorships that began with a PWE, how the PWE changed his or her career trajectory, the significance of the PWE in obtaining a first job, or the opportunity to acquire experience in a particular functional area such as budgeting.

Given its value to the program and our students, the PWE has been further integrated into the competency-based curriculum. Before students begin their PWEs, we now require a signed employment contract with the employer that describes how the proposed work experience serves a public purpose and what projects or responsibilities will be assigned to the student. The contract ensures the PWE is meeting the needs of both the employer and student.

In addition to the employment contract, each student also must submit a learning contract for review and approval by one of our career services directors describing his or her personal learning goals through the PWE. For example, a student providing staff support to a local government advisory board will aim to observe and analyze the various leadership and communication practices of the nonprofit organizations that are most successful in obtaining funding from the board.

Upon completing their PWEs, students must enroll in a new course that requires them to write an organizational analysis paper about their experience. The paper about their course work and PWE to demonstrate the following competencies:

- Analyze the organization and its environments from multiple perspectives, and apply that analysis in assessing alternative courses of action
- Know and apply public service values and legal and ethical principles
- Create and use project management and program plans
- Read, listen, and think critically
- Write and speak clearly, concisely, and unambiguously

The paper satisfies a requirement of the PWE course and ultimately becomes part of the student’s portfolio. It also serves as a writing and research sample when applying for jobs.

Alumni, faculty, and staff members are instrumental in the success of the PWE experience. Many thanks to all of you who play an important role in helping students maximize their learning experiences.

My door is always open. Please visit if you are in Chapel Hill, or contact me anytime with questions or suggestions about our MPA program at rivenbark@sog.unc.edu or 919.962.3707.
“Government is a place where women and people of color can have a good career,” DeHart-Davis said, “because the government is subject to rules, regulations, and procedures that encourage inclusivity. But the further up the ladder you go, the less diversity there is.”

Joy Jackson ’09 returned to the School of Government in 2013 as director of admissions for MPA@UNC. Reflecting on her experience in the MPA program, she said “It’s important to have diversity in the program and to be challenged in your thinking in the classroom because you will be challenged in life. People serving in the highest public leadership roles are still public servants and need to understand and respect the differences reflected within their communities.”

An important part of supporting diversity is ensuring that students feel accepted. The MPA hallway boasts both Safe Zone and Green Zone signs on staff members’ doorways, indicating they have attended sensitivity trainings and letting students and others with concerns about LGBT or military/veterans’ issues know they have an ally within.

Diversity will continue to be an important and challenging issue in the public sector. “You have to make conversations safe when talking about diversity,” said DeHart-Davis. “It is hard to do and difficult to strike a balance. Reactions can be emotional. There are ways to have this conversation, but none are perfect.”

First MPA@UNC Students Graduate December 14

The online format of the MPA program, MPA@UNC, launched in January 2013 with 10 students in the first cohort. Currently, there are 144 students from 22 states plus Taiwan and the Republic of Georgia attending 20 courses online. The first students to complete the online format, Ruth Rivas and Jeremy Schmidt, graduated on December 14, 2014.

Ruth Rivas spent years as a public defender before deciding to pursue an MPA degree. “I wanted to have a greater impact than I could with one ‘not guilty’ verdict at a time,” she said. During the program she moved from law to teaching and said the classroom, in many ways, is “like being in a courtroom.” Rivas earned a BA from New York University, a JD from Brooklyn Law School, and she attended the National Criminal Defense College.

Jeremy Schmidt is a consultant for Booz Allen Hamilton, where he works to find ways to help local governments. Ultimately, he would like to serve as a local government manager. Currently a member of the US Marine Corps Forces Reserves, he served on active duty from 2006 to 2011, including two deployments to Iraq. Schmidt earned a BA from the University of Wisconsin.

Diversity and Inclusion: Continuing the Discussion

On-Demand Webinar
Diversity and Inclusion: Successfully Leveraging Differences in Local Government Organizations is available on demand. For more information, visit www.sog.unc.edu/node/31636.

Professional Network
Join the Engaging Women in Public Service LinkedIn group at bit.ly/engagingwomen.

Save the Date: June 5, 2015
This second Engaging Women in Public Service event will be held in Chapel Hill. Body language expert Carol Kinsey Goman will be the featured speaker. For more information, contact faculty member Leisha DeHart-Davis at ldehart@sog.unc.edu.

MPA Website
Visit the new Diversity and Inclusion section of the MPA website at www.mpa.unc.edu/node/966.
2014 Public Administration Conference Highlights

Deil S. Wright Lecture: Leading the Way with Courage

L. Douglas Wilder, who delivered the 2014 Deil S. Wright Lecture, achieved a series of firsts during his more than four decades of public service. He was the first African American state senator in Virginia since Reconstruction, representing Richmond from 1969 to 1985. He became the first African American in the United States to be elected governor, leading the Commonwealth of Virginia from 1990 to 1994. Wilder’s courage is evident in the obstacles he overcame growing up in a segregated neighborhood in Richmond. He is the grandson of slaves and put himself through college by waiting tables. He earned a law degree from Howard University.

In his November 6 lecture, Wilder discussed the importance of self-determination for those who strive to be leaders. “The courage to lead is the courage to believe in yourself,” he said.

Wilder emphasized the value of supporting the current generation in facing today’s challenges in order to create a better future. He maintained that those in public service must lead with courage. “In my time, there has never been such a lack of trust in government as I see today,” he said. “We must accept that there will be problems that we cannot solve, but we must wrestle with these problems as best as we can.”


State Superintendent Addresses the Future of Public Education

June St. Clair Atkinson is the first woman elected state superintendent of public instruction in North Carolina, a position she has held since 2005. In her keynote address, she spoke about envisioning education in the year 2020.

“It is important to have a road map to where you want to go,” Atkinson said. “Change should not happen for the sake of change but to make things better for young people.” She stressed the role of technology in education and how it may be used to encourage cross-cultural learning, citing the example of a teacher using Skype to teach students about Israel’s geography, terrain, and culture.

“In 2020,” she said, “it will be a matter of practice that our school is brought into the world and that the world is brought into our school.”

www.mpa.unc.edu
GOVERNING Magazine Columnists Discuss Impacts of Recession

Katherine Barrett and Richard Greene research and write about state and local government as columnists for GOVERNING magazine and are consultants to organizations concerned with government policy and performance.

They have recently explored how the recession has changed policies and practices on the local and state level. They concluded from their research that even though revenues have been trending up, local needs have been deferred. The biggest challenges they identified? Organizations have not only experienced personnel cuts, but now human resource departments are having difficulty recruiting and retaining employees.

Despite the difficulties Barrett and Greene identify in their research, they are enthusiastic supporters of the work of government. “Most people who go into government are there to make the world a better place,” said Greene. “Acknowledgement of that is powerful.”

Online and On-Campus Students Connect at Public Administration Conference

During the Public Administration Conference, students from both the online (MPA@UNC) and on-campus formats attended conference sessions, collaborated on a case study, and networked with one another. MPA@UNC students, most of whom were on campus for the first time, also participated in a town hall meeting and additional social events.
Vi Lyles ’74 Receives Donald Hayman Distinguished Public Service Award

by Whitney Harris ’15

Vi Lyles worked for the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, for nearly 30 years. She was a budget analyst, budget director, and then assistant city manager from 1996 to 2004. Lyles helped create Charlotte’s first capital budget and led the restructuring of government programs to evaluate and assess performance audits for city programs. In 2013, she was elected as an at-large representative on the Charlotte City Council.

In his introduction of Lyles at the 2014 Dean’s Dinner, Doug Bean ’74 said “She has had a love affair with Charlotte. She is a passionate public administrator, a community leader, and a friend and classmate. Her commitment to the community is a model to young civil servants.”

Lyles is the first woman to receive the Donald Hayman Distinguished Public Service Award. She is also African American. “I have always been proud of who I am,” she said. “Being African American is an important part of my identity, but it is not all of who I am.”

Lyles credits the MPA program and faculty members as driving factors of her success. “Don Hayman taught me how to write. I learned how to be concise in a page and actually put forth an argument and recommendation in a way that I hope would make him proud,” she said.

Hayman, for whom the public service award is named, was a founding faculty member of the MPA program at UNC-Chapel Hill. His career at the then-Institute of Government began in 1948 and spanned nearly four decades. Having worked with more than 150 cities and counties in North Carolina, Hayman embodied the term “pracademic” for being both an academic and an active practitioner in his field.

“Thirty years in public service goes to your core,” concluded Lyles. “You need a strong value system to be effective.”

Alumni Honor Jean Coble by Giving to the Coble Scholarship

Many thanks to the more than 60 MPA alumni who contributed to a campaign to honor Jean Coble’s commitment to the program, growing the Coble Scholarship Endowment fund to more than $100,000. The scholarship was established in 2005 by the MPA Alumni Association.

At the Dean’s Dinner, MPA Director Bill Rivenbark presented Jean Coble with a plaque recognizing the Jean D. Coble scholarship.
A Conversation with Faculty Member Charles Szypszak
by Whitney Harris ’15

Charles (Chuck) Szypszak joined the School of Government in 2005. Previously, he was director of a general practice firm in New Hampshire, where he provided counsel and advocacy for real estate and business matters. He also was an adjunct professor of law at Franklin Pierce Law Center, a law clerk for Circuit Judge Hugh Bownes on the US Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, and a captain in the US Marine Corps. Szypszak earned a BA from the University of Southern California, an MA from San Diego State University, and a JD from the University of Virginia School of Law.

Szypszak is an expert in real estate law and teaches law for public administration in the MPA program. In 2010, he was awarded the School of Government’s Albert and Gladys Hall Coates Teaching Excellence Award.

Whitney Harris (WH): With your background in the US Marine Corps, how do you think an MPA might benefit military members?

Charles Szypszak (CS): I counsel public officials—including registers of deeds and attorneys—and others on real estate law. Much of my time is spent advising and providing education to the registers of deeds and their deputies and assistants in all of North Carolina’s 100 counties. I advise them on day-to-day operations and legal questions about real estate instruments, vital records, and the issuance of marriage licenses. I also handle real estate questions from legislators and judges and have drafted legislation on the subject.

WH: What is one of the most memorable experiences you have had with the School of Government?

CS: Every year I travel the state to teach workshops for register of deeds staff. I especially enjoy visiting rural areas where local officials do the daily work of local government without much attention except from the citizens who depend on them. Recently, a registrar whom I see every year, and with whom I have always had pleasant conversations, said it was the last time I would see her because she was seriously ill. She wanted to tell me how much my visits had meant to her. I was reminded not only about how lucky I am to work with so many genuinely nice people but also about the importance of our work.

WH: What are your interests outside of teaching?

CS: For many years I have been involved in international collaboration, including in Poland where I have been teaching and working with other academics and government officials. I am currently developing a project with a law school in Ukraine, and I look forward to learning more about the serious challenges there and sharing information that might be useful to a rule of law transition.
TRUE CAROLINA BLUE: DAVID GOLDBERG

by Whitney Harris ’15

David Goldberg worked in public service before entering the MPA program. During his undergraduate career at the University of North Texas, where he graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in emergency administration and planning, he served in the Texas State Guard as a civil affairs officer. This work gave him experience with domestic homeland security issues, hurricanes, and wildfires.

After moving to North Carolina in 2011, Goldberg worked for the General Assembly as assistant sergeant of arms and then as legislative assistant for State Senator Kathy Harrington, an experience that sparked an interest in legislative law. Now a dual-degree student in law and public administration, Goldberg will graduate this year. His capstone paper on “State Regulation and Disruptive Technologies” will be the last capstone paper presented, since future graduates will work within the new portfolio/oral exam system.

“I believe the students here have the potential to change the world.”

Goldberg applied to Carolina MPA because of the program’s emphasis on practical scholarship. “There are a lot of great policy programs in this country,” he said, “but the UNC MPA program is for people who want to roll up their sleeves and get things done. I believe the students here have the potential to change the world. I’m looking for opportunities to be a stakeholder in the policy process.”

David Goldberg received the 2014–2015 Jean D. Coble Scholarship.

Capstone Paper Tradition Transitions to Portfolio Requirement

All students graduating from the MPA program prior to May 2014 were required during their second year to complete a capstone paper drawing on the cumulative lessons of their graduate experience. The capstone tapped their knowledge, analytic abilities, writing skills, and presentation skills as well as the insights they acquired through study, observation, and direct involvement in the practice of public administration.

David Goldberg, who will graduate in May 2015, will present the program’s last capstone paper. Over the years, the practical research included in many capstone papers was used by public officials—MPA alumni and others—when considering policy options for their jurisdictions or agencies. In addition, a number of graduates attribute their first job after the MPA program directly to their research and its relevance to their future employer. The portfolio will serve a similar purpose for graduates going forward.

Archived capstone papers can be found at www.mpa.unc.edu/node/30.
ICMA Hosts 100th Annual Conference in Charlotte

by Whitney Harris ’15

Like the MPA program, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) strives to create excellence in local governance. This year, ICMA held its 100th annual conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, and featured a wide range of sessions, roundtable discussions, speakers, and workshops for professional and personal development.

Megan Dale ’14, current ICMA Fellow serving in Catawba County, North Carolina, was energized by her conference experience. “Each new person I met was full of energy and excited to talk to me about my career path. It is encouraging to know that local government professionals are so dedicated to helping the next generation of public servants.”

At the conference, Amanda Kaufman ’09, assistant to the city manager of Marion, Iowa, was presented with the 2014 ICMA Early Career Leadership Award in Memory of William H. Hansell Jr. This award is given to outstanding early-career professionals who demonstrate leadership, competency, and commitment to the local government profession.

Members of the UNC ICMA student chapter took full advantage of this conference. “Our leadership team saw a special opportunity this year to get as many members as possible down to Charlotte,” said chapter president David Finley. “It was extraordinary to see 20 of our members intermingling with city/county managers from across the country and getting access to some unique professional development opportunities.”

MPA students and alumni found time to network and socialize at a well-attended happy hour at the Carolina Ale House in downtown Charlotte. At a breakfast at the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, Charles Penny ’80, manager of the City of Rocky Mount, spoke to the group.

“The organization is important for students just entering the program as they figure out where they want to take their career, and it is important throughout our careers for continuing professional development and new ideas about ways to provide public service.”

Carolina MPA and ICMA
A Valuable Partnership

ICMA Local Government Management Fellows
Megan Dale ’14, Catawba County, NC
Jenifer Della Valle ’14, Town of Hillsborough, NC
Sarah Hazel ’14, City of Charlotte, NC
Mattie Sue Stevens ’13, City and County of Durham, NC

ICMA Publications by MPA Faculty Members
Leading Performance Management, David A. Ammons
Managing Local Government Services, Carl W. Stenberg and Susan Lipman Austin ’97
Statistics for Public Administration, Maureen Berner
Capital Budgeting and Finance, Justin Marlowe, William C. Rivenbark, and A. John Vogt

Alumnus Serves on ICMA Executive Board
Lee Worsley ’97, Deputy County Manager, Durham County

Alumna Serves on ICMA Staff
Martha Perego ’79, ICMA Director of Member Services

Alumni Served as ICMA Presidents
2004—2005: J. Thomas Lundy ’71
Manager, Catawba County, NC
2002—2003: Peggy Merriss ’82
Manager, City of Decatur, GA
Life Events

On the Move

Raymond Allen ’80 retired as city manager of Albemarle, North Carolina.

Emily Anderson ’07 is director of foundation support and grants management for the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce in New York.

Jessica Aylor ’05 is director of community investment for the Triangle Community Foundation in Durham, North Carolina.

Daniel Baird ’13 is operations manager for ARM Alarm in Cary, North Carolina.

Molly Boyle ’12 is a human services specialist with the Orange County Department of Social Services in North Carolina.

Jane Brasier ’80 is director of business development for LeChase Construction Services in Durham, North Carolina.

Crystal L. Bridgeman ’04 is head of workforce development at Siemens Foundation in Washington, DC.

Cathleen D. Cake ’88 is graduate program business manager at Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences at the College of William and Mary in Gloucester Point, Virginia.

Carrie Cook ’07 is vice president of governmental affairs for the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce in North Carolina.

David Cooke ’82 is the city manager of Fort Worth, Texas.

Monica Croskey ’05 is strategic planning and evaluation manager for Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

Marchell Adams David ’92 is assistant city manager for community in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Heather Drennan ’03 joined the Town of Cary, North Carolina, as senior budget analyst.

Josh Edwards ’05 is strategic initiatives manager in the Budget and Management Services Department of the City of Durham, North Carolina.

Brodi Fontenot ’99 is chief financial officer for the US Department of the Treasury in Washington, DC.

Aaron Gallagher ’97 is administrative services manager for the NC Department of Public Safety.

Jennifer Golynsky ’88 is the regional human resources business partner for NFP Corporate Services in Charlotte, North Carolina.

James Simpson Greene ’87 is assistant city manager for economic development in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Maureen McCormick Harlow ’12 is a digital librarian for the Public Broadcasting Service Media Library in Alexandria, Virginia.

Randy Harrington ’98 is director of management and financial services for the City of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Carrie Henderson ’08 is associate director of programs for Achieving the Dream in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Christi Hurt ’96 is assistant vice chancellor and chief of staff in Student Affairs at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Chris Kenrick ’14 is a designer and developer for Longleaf Solutions in Atlanta, Georgia.

Emily Leik ’12 is economic development and workforce coordinator for the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development in Charlottesville.

Trina Matta ’05 is a consultant with Resource Recycling Systems in Atlanta, Georgia.

Lori Neumeier ’14 is a librarian with the North Carolina Biotechnology Center in Durham, North Carolina.

Kenneth Noland ’97 has been appointed to the Local Government Federal Credit Union board of directors.

Michael Ousdahl ’09 is assistant director of planning and operations for North Carolina State University Transportation in Raleigh.

Adam Parker ’08 has joined Sanford Holshouser LLP as an attorney specializing in public finance, economic development, real estate, and affordable housing in Carrboro, North Carolina.

Tim Reavis ’13 is a grants analyst with the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management.

Katie Reich ’14 is the director of grants and proposal development for North Carolina New Schools in Raleigh.

Christopher Riddick ’07 has accepted an associate position with Booz Allen Hamilton in Washington, DC.

Mike Ruffin ’82 is county manager in Davie County, North Carolina.

Chris Sherman ’05 is chief financial officer with Teachers 2 Teachers International in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Brent Troxell ’12 is a management analyst with the Village of Glenview, Illinois.
Accomplishments

Amanda Kaufman ‘09 won the 2014 ICMA Early Career Leadership Award.

David Leonetti ‘05 obtained a real estate license and certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners. He is a city planner in Hickory, North Carolina.

Weddings


Catherine Durham ‘08 married Brian Renbarger on September 20, 2014, in Wilmington, North Carolina.

Katie Paulson ‘13 married Aaron Todd on September 19, 2014.

New Arrivals

Dwane Brinson ‘09 and wife Betsy welcomed Owen Timothy on July 29, 2014.

Libby Hodges ‘09, wife Melissa, and daughter Moira welcomed Carolyn Rose on July 25, 2014.

Brandon James ‘04 and Alicia James ‘04 announce the birth of son Logan Thomas on May 20, 2014.

Scott Morrissey ‘03 and Brittany Fuentes welcomed daughter Maya Caroline on October 8, 2014.


News for the Life Events section, along with comments or suggestions for IMPACT, should be sent to Brandon Foster at foster@sog.unc.edu.

Jean Coble Retires

by Whitney Harris ’15

Jean Coble retired from the School of Government and MPA program on September 30, 2014—for the second time. In 2004, she retired after serving as MPA program manager for 18 years.

In 2005, Coble returned as the program’s external relations coordinator. In that capacity, she has led program and alumni efforts to raise more than $1.6 million, add eight new scholarships, and shepherd the annual Deil S. Wright Lecture to be a high-profile event with national speakers.

Coble’s time with the program spanned two locations at UNC—the Department of Political Science and the School of Government—and six program directors: Gordon Whitaker, Mike Munger, Steve Allred, David Ammons, Carl Stenberg, and Bill Rivenbark.

“Jean has been an integral part of the program for many years,” said Rivenbark. “Her strong connections with students and alumni have been especially valuable to the MPA program’s outreach efforts.”

Prior to joining the MPA program, Coble worked in student services positions in the departments of geological sciences, biostatistics, and political science at UNC-Chapel Hill. Now, she and her husband, Tim, who retired this year from the US Postal Service, will devote more time to their farm, Eight Willows, where they raise beef cattle, and to attending auctions and restoring antiques to sell at Eight Willows Antiques, their business in Burlington, North Carolina.

Jean Coble relaxes at Eight Willows, the farm where she and her husband, Tim, hosted MPA end-of-year picnics for 25 years.
Save the Date

**FEBRUARY 5, 2015**
MPA ALUMNI BREAKFAST
NC City and County Management Winter Seminar
Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center, Durham

**MAY 10, 2015**
MPA GRADUATION
School of Government, UNC-Chapel Hill

**JUNE 5, 2015**
ENGAGING WOMEN IN PUBLIC SERVICE
School of Government, UNC-Chapel Hill
**Speaker:** Carol Kinsey Goman, Leadership Communication Coach