MPA Alumni Make a Positive Impact on the Environment
by Jenny Noonan ’95

There is a long-standing link between graduates of the UNC MPA Program and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Research Triangle Park (RTP). Some have even smirked and called our group the UNC MPA mafia. From budgeting to writing air pollution standards to briefing Congress, MPA alumni are an integral part of protecting the environment.

It all began with Harvey Richmond ’77. Harvey, who interviewed for the MPA Program with Deil Wright in 1976 at LaGuardia airport, is likely the first MPA graduate to work for EPA in North Carolina. Nearly 30 years have passed since Harvey started his nine-month MPA internship with EPA’s Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards. He is now a national expert on risk assessment, and in May 2008 was awarded one of EPA’s highest honors, the Science Achievement Award for Air Quality. Harvey has a long history of fighting to protect the environment. In high school, he was the founding president of the Ecology Club and chaired his town’s Advisory Ecology Committee. He credits the MPA Program with helping him continue the battle against air pollution throughout his career, including the struggle for the 1997 national ambient air quality standards for ground-level ozone and particles, for which his work on exposure and health risk assessment played an important role. The standards were upheld in a unanimous decision by the US Supreme Court in a landmark case in 2001.

Julie McClintock ’89 began her career at EPA in the early 1990s while a member of the Chapel Hill Town Council. Julie’s role in implementing the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and working with Indian Tribes to improve air quality are particularly noteworthy contributions. Julie retired recently, but has moved on to her “next career,” protecting Chapel Hill’s Bolin Creek and getting involved with local transportation issues.

In total, eight graduates of the MPA Program are currently employed at EPA in North Carolina. More than 2,300 people work at EPA, so MPA alumni have an impact on protecting the environment. After we graduate and go our separate ways, we spend the rest of our lives repeating to our friends and families all of our fond memories from Chapel Hill. We fix the time spent here in a special section of our minds and so—in effect—we never leave. We can always come home again.”

—Sam J. Ervin Jr. ’17
New Faces and New Challenges

This summer the MPA suite has been relatively quiet. Nearly all of the 2008 graduates have left Chapel Hill to begin their public service careers, while the rising second-year students are engaged in their Professional Work Experience with government agencies or nonprofit organizations. It’s been a great time to plan for the year ahead, which will get underway in just a few weeks.

On August 14, orientation will be held for the 29 first-year students who accepted our admissions offer. They are a talented and diverse group, and a good fit with the strengths of the MPA Program. Here are some highlights of the new class profile:

- The Grade Point Average is 3.5, and the Graduate Record Examination average score is 1187
- 15 are female and 14 are male
- 3 are African-American
- 8 are planning to pursue a career in local government and 12 are interested in nonprofit management
- 5 others are enrolled in a dual-degree program with the schools of law and social work, or with the city and regional planning department
- 15 are North Carolina residents
- 5 have undergraduate degrees from UNC-Chapel Hill
- 3 received awards from the Graduate School, including 2 competitive Merit Assistantships and 1 Weiss Urban Livability Supplemental Fellowship
- 1 is a Local Government Fellow (from Cary)

While we are pleased with, and proud of, the quality of the new MPA cohort, the 2008 admissions process revealed three challenges. First, the overall admissions pool has declined steadily over the past four years. This trend may reflect the faculty’s recent refocusing of the program’s mission on public service leadership, especially in local government, which could cause international students and those interested in pursuing careers in areas that are not among our strengths to not apply. Second, as suggested in the above profile, we also are witnessing shrinkage in the number of applicants indicating a desire to work in local or state governments, our historic strength. Data from our accrediting agency, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, indicate that this decline, together with growing nonprofit management specialization enrollments, reflects national trends in student interest. Third, our recent MPA classes have been younger and less experienced, reducing the opportunity for cohorts to benefit from the experience and perspectives of former practitioners enrolled in the program.

These challenges were discussed at the annual MPA retreat in May, and we are working on plans to address them. In particular, we are bolstering our program marketing efforts, including advertising in professional publications and non-traditional venues (like RDU airport) as well as sponsoring exhibits at ICMA, ASPA, and other national conferences. The MPA brochure will be updated and our website will continue to be enhanced and made more user-friendly. And we will explore course scheduling and other changes that will make the MPA Flex Track more attractive to local and state government practitioners.

Future Impact columns will keep you up-to-date on these and other initiatives to grow the program, better serve our students and alumni, and retain our high national rankings. Your ideas and insights are always welcome!

Carl Stenberg

On August 14, orientation will be held for the 29 first-year students who accepted our admissions offer. They are a talented and diverse group, and a good fit with the strengths of the MPA Program.
GRADUATION: A TIME FOR REFLECTION AND WISDOM
May 10, 2008 • Knapp-Sanders Building, School of Government

One by one, the 2008 MPA graduates stood smiling as a peacock blue-trimmed hood was added to their black graduation gowns by Dean Mike Smith and faculty member Gordon Whitaker. After crossing the stage, they were congratulated by program director Carl Stenberg. It was a short walk, but a grand moment in a journey that began with the decision to enter the MPA Program, and it will continue with the many and varied paths they will take in their careers.

Ed Kitchen ’74, vice president of the Joseph M. Bryan Foundation and former city manager of Greensboro, addressed the class, sharing wisdom gained during his many years in public service. He talked about his early experience of making an impact in Greensboro by focusing attention and energy on particular issues.

“I ask you to think about what areas need improvement today,” he said, “and more important, what are you, as a well-trained professional, going to do about them? Once you choose, pursue those interests with vigor and great passion.” Kitchen challenged graduates to be bold leaders and creative thinkers. “I would argue that you are needed now more than ever,” he said. “You have an obligation to use your knowledge and experience to help fix things that are not working well.”

Kitchen also shared some life tips with the graduates. “These are simple. But based on my experience, they are universal assets regardless of your position or role,” he said. “First, treat everyone with respect whether you think they deserve it or not. Second, constantly demonstrate to others – those you work with and those you serve – that you value them. Third, stay in touch with your heart.”

A COMMENCEMENT TALE FROM OUR SCOTTISH FRIEND, “ANGUS”
by Deil Wright

It seems timely around the occasion of MPA graduation exercises that an Angus story is appropriate for inclusion in this issue of Impact. By way of background, you need to imagine that St. Andrews University, located in Scotland, graduates large classes of students headed for careers in public service.

Dr. Angus MacDonald, dean of the School of Public Service, is concluding his address to the soon-to-be graduates at commencement time. Dean Angus discussed at some length the changing and dynamic nature of public administration research, knowledge, and curriculum applications. In closing, however, he conceded: “Now lads and lassies, we know that about half o’ what we taught ye is wrong! The trouble is, we don’t know which half! So be good, be aware, and keep on learnin’.”

2008 Graduates
Justin Matthew Amos
Jacqueline Hartman Ashley
Glenn Allan Barnes
Steven Thomas Buter
Shannon Macfarlane Byers
Andrea Statia Cain
Kyung Ik (Wilson) Cho
Sean Coffey
Ryan Alexander Davidson
Nicholas Jannsen Dula
Ryan Michael Ewalt
Peter Leonard Franzese
Carol Elaine Hickey
Heather Jankowski Chartier
Laura Lee Jensen
John Wells King
Randall James Lyons
Jamie Randall McCall
David Shawn Purvis
Heather Ann Scarbrough
Kathryn Copeland Shem
Charles Michael Stepanek
Heather Rose Strickland
Julie Jane Walden
HISTORY AND POLITICS: DOCUMENTING EPA IMPACT

by Bill Stockard ’92

In the summer of 1995, I worked for Chris Long while writing a 25-year history of the EPA in Research Triangle Park (RTP). During my fall semester project with then-MPA Program Director Mike Munger on the local economic impact of the EPA, Chris Long started thinking “bigger picture” and wanted to document the EPA’s accomplishments in North Carolina. The ultimate goal was to support the effort to build a new RTP headquarters. It was a dream come true for a summer intern (and a former journalist).

In the short term, the experience enabled me to research the impact that the EPA has had locally, nationally, and globally; my Capstone paper dealt with the politics involved in building a new EPA facility. It was inspiring to be in an atmosphere that provided plenty of support from Chris, Ben Scaggs, and many others in RTP and in Washington, DC, who were understandably proud of what they did and represented. Chris was all energy and enthusiasm, and often couldn’t find a piece of paper quickly enough to write down his next ideas.

In the long term, the EPA was able to illustrate how far the agency had come and what it could still do with additional consolidated laboratory and office space. I am proud to have played a small part in the process that led to the opening of the new, award-winning EPA facility.

The campus is noted for its extraordinary “green” qualities, including solar-powered street lights and furniture that doesn’t off gas (release chemicals into the air). Eighty percent of the construction waste from the new building was segregated and recycled, which kept about 20 million pounds of materials out of regional landfills. Chris Long ’81 was a key player in the design and construction of the RTP facility before leaving EPA for the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences. Suzanne Roberts ’87 worked with Chris for seven years as part of the Facilities Development Staff. Suzanne started as an EPA intern in the 1980s and is now deputy director for the Human Resources Division. She credits her MPA education with helping her “think innovatively during the building process.”

While the MPA Program has its roots in training local leaders in North Carolina and EPA is a federal entity, one graduate has merged the two into a successful career. Ben Scaggs ’87 was recently promoted to director of administration in EPA’s Office of Administration and Resource Management in RTP. This job is unofficially known as “Mayor of the EPA campus.” Ben credits the MPA Program for getting him a job at EPA as he was starting out, and over the years he has relied on MPA alumni and teachers to serve as sounding boards. “It’s nice to have practicing managers who are former classmates,” he says. “You don’t have to do the diplomatic dance around before getting advice.”

Program Analyst BJ Collins ’01 says he owes his employment at EPA entirely to Ben Scaggs. “They were looking for someone to work on the organization’s budget, and I simply responded to an e-mail,” said Collins. He never planned on a career in the federal government, but he believes it has been a blessing in disguise. “While my job description focuses on managing the budget, it is the many different things I do every day that keep me energized. You never know what to expect, and I believe that is the challenge I am looking for.”

Doug Solomon ’88, a classmate of Ben’s, also works on air pollution issues at RTP. In 1988, Doug had decided not to return to grad school when he got tickets to the first round of the men’s NCAA basketball tournament at the Smith Center. He had already applied to the MPA Program and decided that since the games were Thursday and Saturday, he would have time for the MPA interview on Friday.

“I was so impressed by the interview process, I decided to go back to school at UNC,” remembers Doug. “Beautiful campus. Great place to go to school. However, the basketball coach wasn’t up to the standard I was used to from my undergraduate days at Indiana University.” In addition to rising above his basketball delusions and befriending many Carolina fans during his two years on campus, Doug counts meeting his wife, Ramona, as the highlight of his time in the program. Ten years after first coming to North Carolina, Doug started working at EPA. “The MPA Program gave me a perspective on dealing with people and organizational structures—of getting things done within the confines of a bureaucracy,” says Doug.

Doug is also helping the newest member of the mafia start her EPA career. Jackie Ashley ’06, who interned for me on the Policy Analysis and Communications staff last summer, is doing a three-month rotation in Doug’s Emissions Inventory group. She’ll be working on outreach to Indian Tribes. ☞
The Capstone banquet, held May 18 at La Residence in Chapel Hill, concluded this year’s two-day Capstone Conference. The evening’s featured speaker, chosen by the MPA graduating class, was Cal Horton, retired town manager of Chapel Hill and adjunct faculty member. Cal provided a generous dose of laughter with his stories of life in public service.

Shawn Purvis received the Deil Wright Capstone Paper Award. His paper, *Tax Increment Financing in North Carolina: Great Expectations, Limited Use*, explored the issues local leaders consider when evaluating the use of tax increment financing in North Carolina communities. Shawn’s capstone advisory committee was composed of faculty members Bill Rivenbark, Jonathan Morgan, and Greg Allison. In researching and writing his Capstone paper, Shawn received support from the North Carolina League of Municipalities as well as guidance from faculty member Willow Jacobson.

Glenn Barnes received the Nanette V. Mengel Communication Award. Glenn’s paper and presentation, *Post-Construction Stormwater Management in North Carolina Today*, provided insight into the various strategies local governments use to manage stormwater BMPs (best management practices). Jeff Hughes, Richard Whisnant, and Dale Roenigk served on Glenn’s Capstone committee. Glenn received support from the Environmental Finance Center at the School of Government and the Triangle J Council of Governments.

Congratulations to Shawn and Glenn on their awards. All of the 2008 Capstone papers are available online at www.mpa.unc.edu/students.

MPA STUDENTS HONORED

Congratulations to second-year students Mira Schainker, who was recently selected as a Founders Forum Fellow by the American Society for Public Administration, and Carrie Cook, who was inducted into the National Forum of Black Administrators and received the AmeriCorps Education Fellowship Award.
Justin Amos had a full schedule working as a budget analyst intern for the Orange County Budget Office, and he was only a few weeks away from graduation, but he couldn’t resist an invitation for lunch at Allen & Son BBQ. I was thrilled to have the opportunity to spend time with him to find out more about his background and his experience in the MPA Program.

Justin is from Summerfield, North Carolina, in northwest Guilford County. He credits his family with shaping who he is today. His mother is a nurse manager at Wesley Long Community Hospital and his dad taught high school US history. “My parents are great examples of giving back,” he said. “We were active as a family in our community and church.” Justin became an Eagle Scout in high school. For his Leadership Service Project, he landscaped and built a meditation courtyard that is still used at his church.

Justin received his undergraduate degree in political science from UNC-Chapel Hill with a minor in history. Before entering the MPA Program, he worked as an assistant property manager in a commercial development and property management firm and considered going to law school. An Internet search for “public service” led him to our MPA Program, and a chance meeting and conversation with Willow Jacobson helped him decide to apply.

An active runner and team sports junkie, Justin coached several of the MPA student intramural sports teams. “I’ve enjoyed the social aspects of the MPA Program,” he said. “It has been great to interact with people from all over the country, to play sports, go to picnics, and out to dinner as a group. We are all different; having the opportunity to listen to each other and explore those differences in this environment has been a great experience.”

Justin says that he always worked two or three jobs to support himself in school. A recipient of the Nanette V. Mengel Scholarship, he says, “I could not have survived without the help of the Mengel family, alumni, and friends, who provided tuition scholarships.”

After graduation, Justin began work in the city manager’s office in Charlotte as an International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Fellow.

“I have learned from the experiences of the professors who teach in a proactive, hands-on approach and have been able to apply skills I already had and develop new skills,” he says. “The MPA Program offers the best opportunity to learn theory of management and at the same time engage in real world issues.”
To say that Al Leonard is disciplined would be an understatement. A couple of years ago, as a New Year’s resolution, Leonard vowed to drink only water for the entire year, just to see if he could do it. And Leonard is a guy who loves diet soda. “I did that,” he recalls with a chuckle. “I sure did.”

Of course, one has to have a measure of self-discipline to be a town manager. Leonard obviously has that. But here’s the thing: Leonard doesn’t just do the duties of town manager for one municipality. He is a de facto town manager for five communities in Columbus County: Tabor City (his full-time job), Boardman, Brunswick, Cerro Gordo, and Fair Bluff (the last four as an advisor). 

Tabor City, with the exception of one year as the Anson County manager. He had more than enough on his plate in Tabor City before Hurricane Fran hit in the mid-1990s. That’s when Leonard, because of a friendship with former Fair Bluff Mayor J.B. Evans and former Town Attorney Dennis Worley, helped the neighboring community with FEMA paperwork. Leonard recalls Evans telling him that the town couldn’t afford a full-time manager, but sure could use a manager one day a week. Not long after that, Fair Bluff asked Leonard to work one day a week on a contractual basis. Tabor City’s board gave its blessing as long as Tabor City was his first priority.

All for one and one for all

All agree that the success of this symbiotic relationship works because of Tabor City and its trust in allowing Leonard to help out the neighboring communities. “It starts with Tabor City. That’s my full-time job. That’s where I live. That’s where my family is,” says Leonard. “The board there has made it clear, ‘You’ve got to put in your hours here.’”

Leonard does just that, though he finds time for the others, either in person or on the phone. On Wednesdays, however, it’s off to Fair Bluff and then to Cerro Gordo. If he has to take a trip to the county seat of Whiteville, which he does quite often, then Leonard will stop in on Brunswick. The only town that doesn’t regularly get a visit from Leonard is Boardman, which at 30 miles is the longest trek from Tabor City. “When they call me, I come out,” says Leonard.

The elected officials in the municipalities state that when Leonard is in their town, his undivided attention is paid to their needs. “When he comes to Fair Bluff, you feel like he’s full-time in Fair Bluff. I’m sure when he goes to Boardman, it’s the same way,” says Britt. “He doesn’t show favoritism to any one of us.”

Each of the communities has been helped individually because of Leonard’s efforts, and to list them all would take up an entire publication. Harper credits Leonard for getting $20 million worth of grants over the years for Tabor City. The municipal Lake Tabor dam—which was destroyed because of a hurricane—was repaired because of his ability to pursue grants.

Sen. R.C. Soles Jr. credits Leonard for basically saving Brunswick from “going under” by figuring out that the town could annex a nearby corrections facility to count the inmates as citizens. Cerro Gordo and Tabor City both have new town halls (meaning Leonard’s office is no longer in the old Tabor City jail), and Brunswick’s has been renovated. Tabor City has a new fire truck and substation. Fair Bluff has

continued on page 8
Kent Mathewson, 90, of Bermuda Village, North Carolina, died March 31, 2008, in Winston-Salem. Mathewson was an early leader in city management, serving as city manager in Asheboro, North Carolina, and in other public service positions around the country.

Mathewson was born in 1917 in New York City; his family moved from Long Island to Raleigh in 1925. Mathewson earned a bachelor’s degree in public administration at UNC-Chapel Hill in 1939 with a concentration in city management. This program was the first of its kind in the country, and Mathewson was among the first UNC graduates in public administration, pre-dating the MPA Program.

During World War II, Mathewson served as a captain in the US Army Air Force. He later became the youngest city manager in the country when he was hired in Asheboro. Mathewson also worked in Martinsville, Virginia; Salem, Oregon; and Detroit, Michigan. After 16 years in Michigan, he moved to Austin, where he taught city and county management and planning at the University of Texas.

In 2000 Mathewson was honored with a Special Recognition Award presented jointly by the American Society for Public Administration and the National Academy of Public Administration. After retiring, he founded the Community Foundation of Davie County.
**LIFE EVENTS**

### On the Move

**Justin Amos ’06** is an ICMA Local Government Management Fellow. He will serve his fellowship in Charlotte.

**Jackie Ashley ’06** is a Presidential Management Fellow and is working for EPA in Research Triangle Park.

**Glenn Barnes ’06** is project director for the Environmental Finance Center at the School of Government.

**Mike Branum ’03** recently left his post as EMS unit manager for the State of Alaska and is now emergency manager for the City and Borough of Juneau.

**Steven Buter ’06** is an ICMA Local Government Management Fellow. He will serve his fellowship in University Place, Washington.

**Shannon Byers ’06** is working for the NC Office of the State Controller in Raleigh.

**Andrea Cain ’06** recently accepted a position on the Business and Economic Development Team with the Texas Legislative Budget Board in Austin.

**Tony Caudle ’81** was recently named deputy city manager of Wilmington.

**Stephanie Coplin ’04** accepted a position with the Greensboro Economic Development Alliance as manager of cluster development and retention services.

**Wilson Cho ’06** returned to South Korea after graduation to resume employment with the City of Seoul.

**Ryan Davidson ’06** is a budget analyst for the Sheriff’s Office in Wake County.

**Amy Pomeranz Essley ’98** is director of quality assurance and AIM administrator at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Indiana.

**Ryan Ewalt ’06** accepted a position with Downes Associates in Salisbury, Maryland.

**Peter Franzese ’06** was hired as a management analyst for the City of Concord.

**Sam Greenwood ’70** was appointed town manager of Franklin. He is the first manager to fill this role since the town converted to a council-manager form of government.

**Laura Jensen ’06** works for the Durham County Budget Office.

**Jamie McCall ’06** is pursuing a PhD in public administration at North Carolina State University.

**Sharon Paynter ’01** has accepted a post-doctoral fellowship in law and public policy at Brown University. Her focus is on policy diffusion across states, looking at judicial performance measurement as an example.

**Shawn Purvis ’06** was appointed assistant manager for the City of Clinton.

**Matt Roylance ’97** was appointed environmental services manager of Wake County.

**Heather Scarbrough ’06** accepted the position of press assistant to US Senator Bob Corker (TN) in Washington.

**Kate Shem ’06** is working for Partners in Out-of-School Time in Charlotte.

**Michael Stepanek ’06** has returned to his full-time position as director of the MBA program at the Kenan-Flagler Business School.

**Heather Stickland ’06** is working as a human resources consultant for Employment and Compensation in Wake County.

**Julie Walden ’06** accepted a position with US EPA in Atlanta.

**Alan Windsor ’01** has left the Homeland Security Institute to work with Good Harbor Consulting in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

### Accomplishments

**Mark Bondo ’02** published an article in the May issue of *Public Policy and Practice* titled “Addressing Immigration in South Carolina.”

**Lavonnie Perry Claybon ’87** received a PhD in education with an emphasis in Instructional Design for Online Learning from Capella University in March. Her dissertation, “A Case Study of Faculty who Teach Online Graduate Distance Education Courses,” is available on the UMI database. In 2000 she received a master’s degree in education and human development from George Washington University.

### New Arrivals

**BJ Collins ’01** and his wife celebrated the birth of their son, Carson Gray Collins, on March 28, 2008.

**Tanya Conklin ’00** and husband Mike welcomed daughter Emerson JoAnn Weitkamp Conklin on November 15, 2007.

**Mark Williams ’89** and Tasha Merrill welcomed a new addition last summer. John Merrell Williams was born August 2, 2007. He is really motoring around now and loves to hear his dad talk about statistics and triathlons!

### Retirements

**Rick Apling ’69** is retiring from Congressional Research Service.
The people in these communities understand how unique the set-up is. Leonard credits Tabor City for its success; everyone else credits him. “Time after time a need would arise and Al would come to us and say we have this need and he would put in an application and we would kind of make it happen,” says Soles. “A lot of times I think we got more credit than we were due because Al really was the workhorse…. The real success is because Al is extremely competent.”

“Someone on the outside looking in may wonder, ‘how’s this going to work?’ But we’ve had no problems, and it’s due to the personality, the qualifications and the characteristics of the person we’re talking about and his ability to make things blend and work together,” says Britt. “It’s obvious he can do it.”

Regardless of how it works, Leonard is confident that this type of arrangement could be valuable in other parts of the state, particularly the rural ones. “If you got into a more urbanized area where issues were bigger and the pace is a little faster, you probably couldn’t.”

The man, the myth, the legend
To hear the folks in Columbus County’s municipalities talk, there’s no way on earth that Al Leonard ever sleeps. In fact, many of them have seen him in the middle of the night (or rather the very early morning) doing water inspections. “He’s got so many irons in the fire. I don’t know how he does it,” says Williamson.

Leonard does, in fact, find time to sleep in addition to his local government work (which takes up about 57 hours a week). He has also found time to be a devoted husband to wife Suzette and father to Hannah and Abigail, a coach, and a Sunday school teacher. He likes to cruise around the lake near his house on his boat, snow ski, and read for pleasure—when he can. He has also found time to travel to see his favorite rock bands, Fleetwood Mac and the Rolling Stones, probably a dozen or more times each. He has also managed to squeeze in a couple of trips to Australia over the years.

But it’s the things that he does for others—not even counting his government work—that stands out to the elected officials for which he works. “One thing I admire about Al that has nothing to do with government is his love for the fellow man,” says Harper. “He makes sure everyone’s taken care of.”

“The bottom line is he’s just a special person,” says Minerva Williams. But Leonard brushes off such accolades, choosing, instead, to turn the attention on those for whom he works. “It would be real easy to make fun of the small towns and not take them seriously,” he says. “The fact of the matter is the council members, they take it very seriously. They love their towns. As long as they’re committed and they think I can help them, I will roll up my sleeves and fight with them. I’ll go toe-to-toe for whatever it is they want to accomplish. It is very, very difficult being an elected official in a small town. We’ve got good council members whose hearts are in the right place.”

With 23 years under his belt, Leonard will be approaching retirement age in the coming years. To the elected officials in western Columbus County, the “R” word is a curse word when it comes to the subject of Al Leonard. The good news is that Leonard will soon have two girls to put through college. “I’ll probably still be behind this desk,” he admits.

Leonard still thoroughly enjoys his job, even though he is pulled in several different directions. He says that he still considers himself a student of local government and tries to learn something new every day. “One of my idols growing up was Richard Petty,” Leonard says. “He said, ‘when this stops being fun, I’ll get out.’ When he got to the end of his career, he realized it would always be fun…. That’s the way I feel. I know I will always want to be the Tabor City town manager. I love it that much.”

To hear the folks in Columbus County’s municipalities talk, there’s no way on earth that Al Leonard ever sleeps. In fact, many of them have seen him in the middle of the night (or rather the very early morning) doing water inspections.
Summer 2008 Professional Work Experience

by Susan Austin, MPA Placement Coordinator and Project Director

Once again our second-year students are placed with a broad range of organizations for their 10-week, professional work experience (PWE). The PWE is an excellent opportunity for students to test the waters in their area of interest, obtain practical experience working on substantive projects, and network with professionals who will be future resources.

And isn’t it exciting that we have alumni from the last four decades supervising our students this summer? Of the 23 agencies where students have placements, 16 have MPA alumni—just another example of the many ways our alumni give back to the program.

Local Government
Amber Broach – City of Cary, Budget Office
Darrell Butts – City of Rocky Mount, Manager’s Office
Victoria Cunningham – Granville County, Manager’s Office
Jason Damweber – Town of Chapel Hill, Manager’s Office (reporting to Flo Miller ‘77, deputy town manager)
Monica Evans – City of Decatur, GA, Manager’s Office (reporting to Peggy Merriss ‘82, city manager)
John Gowan – Orange County, Budget Office
Alicia Medina – Wake County, Community Services Department (reporting to Frank Cope ‘88, administrative services coordinator)
Andrew Stevenson – Orange County, Manager’s Office (reporting to Gwen Harvey ‘76, assistant county manager)
Mary Tiger – Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities
Megan Wright – Wake County, Environmental Services Department (reporting to Matt Roylance ‘97, environmental services manager)

State Government
Katie Burdett – NC Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (reporting to Scott Mouw ‘87, section chief)
Ashley Clark – NC Department of State Treasurer, Retirement Systems Division
Carrie Cook – NC Department of Public Instruction
K.C. Tydgat – NC General Assembly, Fiscal Research Division (reporting to Jim Klingler ‘00, fiscal analyst, capital planning)

Federal Government
Chris Riddick – US Government Accountability Office (GAO), Natural Resources and Environment, Washington, DC
Sybil Tate – US EPA, Office of Administration & Resources Management (reporting to B.J. Collins ‘01, program analyst)

Nonprofit Organizations
Emily Anderson – NC Rural Economic Development Center
Mira Schainker – Pew Environmental Group, Washington, DC

University of North Carolina
Lukas Brun – Center for Competitive Economies, Kenan Institute, UNC-Chapel Hill

Consulting
Lindsey Davis – Fountainworks, Raleigh
Greg Mavraganis – URS Corporation, Morrisville
Sarah Waterman – Regional Technology Strategies, Carrboro

Correction to Donor List

The spring 2008 issue regrettably omitted Tim Coble and Cal Horton ‘66 from the list of donors to the MPA Program. We sincerely apologize for the error and truly appreciate their support.
Giving Back: 2006 Class Gift Campaign

The 2006 Class Gift Campaign was a huge success, with 93% of the class making a commitment to the campaign. We are pleased to announce that the class has raised $4,580 for student scholarships and MPA Program general support. The Class of 2006 has the highest rate of participation for any MPA class to date!

The tradition of giving back runs deep among our alumni. No matter what class you’re in, you can keep giving. It’s not a competition; it’s an investment in the future of a student who could not afford the program without a scholarship. It’s an investment in the future of the MPA Program.

Visit www.mpa.unc.edu for more information.