

IMPACT

**A L U M N I
NEWSLETTER**
SUMMER 2011

MPA Alumni Take Role in Government Transitions

By Safa Sajadi



Doug Rothwell '78 and Sharon Rothwell '78 served on the transition team for Michigan Governor Rick Snyder.



Hallie Schenker Mason '93 was part of the transition team for West Virginia Governor Ray Tomblin.

When the last polls have closed after an election and a candidate has been proclaimed the winner, the real work begins. "The 90-day period following an election is a pivotal time for elected officials to not only assemble a transition team but to begin working on the issues," says Doug Rothwell '78, president and CEO of Business Leaders for Michigan. Doug Rothwell and Sharon Rothwell '78, vice president of corporate affairs for Masco Corporation, have been involved with government transitions for well over 30 years. This past fall

they served on the transition team for Rick Snyder, the new governor of Michigan.

"Transitioning from one government to another is physically, emotionally, and mentally exhausting, and is especially difficult given the limited time frame," says Sharon Rothwell. Both Rothwells mention the hard work, late nights, and complex issues that are the common components of a transition. In addition, they say, the real "bread and butter" of a transition involves understanding the political environment, fostering relationships built

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"Public service is a lofty and noble pursuit with great rewards, both personal and professional."

—Steve Raper '74, retired Rocky Mount city manager in his commencement address to 2011 MPA graduates

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Government Transitions, continued from page 1

What advice do these experienced alumni and others have for students or alumni who may work on a transition team—besides working hard, putting in late hours, and acquiring a tough skin?

- Sharon Rothwell: “Organizations are like living beings; they go through changes and it’s important to take an active role in their development.”
- Hallie Schenker Mason: “During times of transition, your counsel will be valued highly if you present multiple sides of an issue as well as multiple options for policymakers to consider.”
- Governor Holshouser: “It’s important to work hard during a transition and all throughout the process, but the important thing to remember is to not worry about who gets the credit.”
- Norma Houston: “Recognize that it’s about serving the public and it’s really the people’s department you are serving.”

on trust, and engaging in innovative problem-solving.

What exactly is a government transition and what are some things that need to be addressed during this time? MPA faculty member Norma Houston says government transition can refer to a change in leadership (when a new leader is elected) or a change in political policy or agenda. When transitions occur in leadership, says Doug Rothwell, “the work can range from planning where the elected official will live, how staff meetings will be conducted, and what steps will be taken to handle a budget shortfall.”

Equally important is the task of navigating political changes such as that precipitated by the election of Governor James E. Holshouser Jr. in 1973. As the first Republican elected as governor of North Carolina since the turn of the century, he faced a tough road. “Robert W. Scott, the outgoing governor, was very gracious following the election,” Governor Holshouser said recently. “He made sure to have a sit-down with me and really went out of his way to ease the transition.” However, his transition team still had to grapple with some real challenges. Given the nature of the election, the team had to focus not only on the budgetary challenges but the needs and political make up of the legislature. Having already honed his leadership skills in the legislature and as chairman of the appropriations committee, the new governor quickly recognized that understanding the political environment was essential.

“The best thing to do in a transition or any other situation is to work hard to foster relationships based on trust,” said Governor Holshouser.

Sometimes the transition can be a bit more complicated. Hallie Schenker Mason ’93, now director of public policy for West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin, witnessed a transition that ended up in the State Supreme Court. After the death of US Senator Robert C. Byrd, West Virginia Governor Joe Manchin resigned from office and was elected to fill the senator’s seat. West Virginia’s Senate President Earl Ray Tomblin, first in line for succession, ascended to the governor’s position. Constitutional and legal experts noted that state code and the state constitution were not aligned in succession instructions. A West Virginia Supreme Court decision led to the 2011 special election for governor, and Tomblin was elected.

Following a tumultuous election cycle, relationship-building is key, but problem-solving is equally important. “Borrowing and adopting ideas from business can be helpful during a transition,” says Doug Rothwell. “In some ways you really have to think innovatively and be entrepreneurial about the transition. Business approaches are useful because they are outcome-centered.” Norma Houston agrees. “Start with working backward from your goal, understanding your deadlines, and chronicling the decisions that have to be made,” she says.

A Conversation with New MPA Director Bill Rivenbark

By Safa Sajadi

The MPA program will welcome Bill Rivenbark as its new program director in September 2011. Recently, I had the opportunity to learn more about him and hear his thoughts on starting this new position.



Professor Rivenbark grew up with two older brothers in Columbia, Alabama, a small town of approximately 900. He received an undergraduate business degree and MPA from Auburn University, and a PhD from Mississippi State University.

Safa Sajadi: *What did you do after graduate school?*

Bill Rivenbark: I worked for three years for the City of Greenville, South Carolina, including one year as the finance director. It was that experience that cultivated my passion for local government and where I began developing the expertise that I have continued to refine here at the School of Government.

SS: *How do you use your expertise on behalf of the School of Government and the MPA program?*

BR: I provide technical assistance and conduct applied research for state and local government. I advise and offer instruction to state and

local government officials on the topics of performance and financial management. I maintain an active research agenda, writing for both academic and professional journals. As director, I will continue to teach Government Budgeting and Finance to first-year MPA students.

SS: *How do you feel about the new position you are about to fill?*

BR: I am extremely excited and honored to have the opportunity to serve in this critical role.

SS: *What changes do you see or plan to implement for the MPA program in the future?*

BR: There are three changes that I would like to see: adjusting the curriculum in order to leverage the expertise of current and new faculty members, increasing the rigor of the program to reflect the demands of working in public service, and giving students more flexibility to take electives.

SS: *What do you believe are the program's greatest strengths?*

BR: Our first strength is our reputation, which allows us to attract outstanding applicants; second is the theoretical and practical curriculum offered by faculty members who work directly with state and local government officials; and lastly, our alumni network.

SS: *What sets our program apart from other MPA programs?*

BR: It is unique that our program is located in the School of Government, where it does not compete with other academic programs and where students have access to faculty members who work in both academic and applied settings.

SS: *What do you believe are some benefits of having an MPA degree?*

BR: As an MPA degree holder myself, I believe that the degree provides an understanding of leadership, a theoretical and practical perspective of public service, and many opportunities for career advancement.

SS: *What do you believe are some of the biggest challenges you will face as director?*

BR: Ongoing budget reductions will impact our ability to provide financial aid to students and therefore to recruit the very best. This is a particular concern in the area of local government, where we go head-to-head with programs at Syracuse University, the University of Kansas, and the University of Georgia for applicants who want to become city and county managers.

SS: *Have you been making preparations for becoming director of the program?*

BR: Yes. I have been traveling to meet with groups of alumni and am especially excited to meet those who have not been in my classes. It has been very helpful to get their ideas and feedback about the future of the program. I have been impressed with how connected our alumni are to Carolina MPA.

For information about Bill Rivenbark's career and expertise, see the Spring 2011 issue of *Impact* and his faculty profile at www.mpa.unc.edu.

Message to Graduates: “Leadership is your purpose”

By Safa Sajadi

Commencement speaker Steve Raper '74, retired Rocky Mount city manager, addressed graduates, their families and friends, and MPA faculty and staff members at the graduation ceremony on May 7. Raper spoke of public service as a “lofty and noble pursuit with great rewards, both personal and professional.” In his address, “But That’s Not What Ships Are For,” Raper urged graduates to “become leaders and to one day take command of your ship. Just as a ship’s purpose is to go to sea, yours, my friends, is to be a leader in public service.”

Raper is a Durham native who received his undergraduate and MPA degrees from UNC-Chapel Hill. He retired in 2010 after 15 years as city manager of Rocky Mount, where he was first employed as administrative assistant to the city manager and later promoted to assistant city manager. He served as city manager of Henderson, North Carolina; Hendersonville, Tennessee; and Kinston, North Carolina, before returning to Rocky Mount in 1994.



Francinia McKeithan receives her hood from Dean Mike Smith (left) and Professor Gordon Whitaker at the graduation ceremony on May 7. McKeithan said, “While the ceremony was the culmination of the work I’ve completed here, the faculty, staff, and members of my MPA cohort are now a part of my family.”

2011 Graduates

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Ashley Barriga | Kevin McLaughlin |
| Eleanor Blake | Kathryn Mulvaney |
| Dwane Brinson | Lydia Newman |
| Kevin Bryant | Michael Ousdahl |
| Jennifer Butler | Danielle Peacock |
| Annie Francis | Emily Portner |
| Michelle Hall | Safa Sajadi |
| Julie Hochsztein | Katie Sirakos |
| Libby Hodges | Heather Stingley |
| Joy Jackson | Cooper Strickland |
| Kendra Jensen | Alex Terry |
| Suzanne Julian | Tyler Thomas |
| Amanda Kaufman | Erika Walker |
| Melvin McDermott III | Jonathan Yeomans |
| Francinia McKeithan | |

2011 Capstone Awards Presented to Emily Portner and Amy Strecker

The rigorous Capstone projects, which are required of every second-year MPA student, are intended to draw on the cumulative lessons of a student's graduate experience. This year's Capstone projects were presented on April 20.

Emily Portner received the Deil Wright Capstone Paper Award for her paper, *Examining the Effect of Multi-Year Capital Budgeting: Does Forward Thinking Enhance Financial Condition?* The award was presented by MPA Director Carl Stenberg. The winning paper is chosen based on how well an issue is addressed and researched and the presence of meaningful and persuasive conclusions. Judges for this award included School of Government faculty members Kara Millonzi (chair) and Frayda Bluestein, and Fagan Stackhouse '71, human resources director, Charleston County, South Carolina.

Amy Strecker received the Nanette V. Mengel Communication Award for her Capstone conference presentation of *Flocking to Facebook: How Local Governments Can Build Citizen Engagement*. The award is given annually to a student who displays exceptional oral communication skills in the presentation of his or her research paper. In selecting Strecker for the award, the judges commented

on her "fluid presentation and high enthusiasm." Judges for this award included alumni Lydian Altman '84, Ben Eisner '05, Johanna Foster '05, Chris Sherman '05, Sybil Tate '08, and Candy Terrell-Galke '95.

All Capstone papers can be viewed at www.mpa.unc.edu.



Emily Portner received the 2011 Deil Wright Capstone Paper Award.



Amy Strecker received the 2011 Nanette V. Mengel Communication Award.

Alumni Spotlight: Anne M. Tompkins, US Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina

By Safa Sajadi

Anne Tompkins '84 has filled many roles in her career (see sidebar), and she credits the MPA program for having a positive impact throughout. "United States Attorney is not a job one can readily aspire to," she says. The position is a presidential appointment. Timing, credentials, and a strong work ethic have been crucial. "In every job, I tried to do my best, whether it was being a budget analyst for the City of Charlotte or a state prosecutor."

The US Attorney job is as much administrative as legal. Tompkins manages a staff, prepares budgets, and directs policy. She is also responsible for overseeing all federal criminal and civil investigations and cases in the 32 westernmost counties of North Carolina. She supervises a staff of approximately 36 attorneys and 37 support personnel. She credits the MPA program with helping her be prepared to manage difficult situations such as the one she faced earlier this year.

"Congress had not yet finalized a budget, and we were making plans for the potential impact of a government shutdown on our organization," she said. "I have found that these moments do not have as much to do with a law degree as with having an understanding of organizational dynamics, knowing how to manage people, and having abilities as a leader. These qualities have a direct correlation to the MPA program."

For recent graduates and alumni, Tompkins offers this advice:

- **Find something that you love about your job. It makes things easier when times are tough.**
- **Become an expert at what you do. Develop a specialty, or be the go-to person for a task. Not only will this get you recognized but it will help you enjoy your job.**

- **Your MPA education qualifies you for many different positions. If you decide to move on to another field, it is not something you leave behind, but knowledge you carry with you.**
- **Nurture your professional relationships. They can be drawn on when times get tough.**



Carolina MPA alumna Anne M. Tompkins was named US Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina in April 2010.

Career Highlights

April 2010	Appointed by President Barack Obama as US Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina	2000–2005	Assistant US Attorney, Western District of North Carolina, served as Deputy Criminal Chief for violent crimes and narcotics
2005–2010	Partner, Alston & Bird LLP, Charlotte	1992–2000	Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office
2008–2009	Adjunct Instructor, Charlotte School of Law	1992	Earned a JD, UNC-Chapel Hill School of Law
2004–2005	Detailed by the US Justice Department to the Regime Crimes Liaison Office in Baghdad, Iraq; assisted the Iraqi Special Tribunal investigating international humanitarian crimes committed by members of the regime of Saddam Hussein	1985–1989	Budget Analyst, City of Charlotte
		1988	Graduated from Carolina MPA
		1984	Earned a BA, UNC-Charlotte

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Moving Forward



Bill Rivenbark is preparing to settle into the MPA director's office, and I am moving to the fourth floor of the School of Government. Bill brings to the directorship vision, dedication, energy, and experience. Under his leadership, the MPA program is poised to move to a higher level of quality, visibility, and resources. I look forward to working with Bill and MPA colleagues to continue to strengthen our program.

Thanks to you, our alumni, for your support, encouragement, and counsel during my term as director. In my final column, I want to share some challenges and indicate how they are being addressed.

The Market is Changing

While the 2010 applicant pool of 151 was our largest in history, the 2011 pool of 102 was below the recent average. The quality of applicants, as measured by GRE scores and GPA averages, continues to climb. But market surveys show that prospective students are interested in quality programs that are accessible, affordable, and flexible. Our full-time, two-year program, with the highest credit hour requirement (54) among NASPAA members, greatly limits accessibility. The in-state tuition is a relative bargain compared with the out-of-state tuition. And a program lacking evening, weekend, and online classes, as well as accelerated semesters, is not considered "flexible" by prospective students.

A strong focus on local government has historically been our area of strength, but other top-ranked programs with a specialization in city and county management are also experiencing declining applications. Many students are setting their career sights on employment with the federal government, nonprofit organizations, and international agencies. Ironically, the drop-off in local government interest comes at a time when ICMA and state managers' associations are advocating the need to prepare for a retirement "tsunami" that will likely hit once retirement-eligible local government professionals can afford to leave their positions. When economic conditions improve, will there be enough talented MPA graduates in the local pipeline?

Smaller is Better?

While in recent years the size of the entering class has expanded, by UNC standards we are still considered a "boutique" program. Over the years our mantra has been "smaller is better," and there is much evidence to support that claim. But perhaps it is time to reconsider our niche.

Money Talks

We are grateful for alumni gifts to the endowment. Scholarships funded by the endowment, together with research assistantships (RA) supported by UNC's Graduate School, are crucial to attracting students and enabling them to continue their studies. Research assistantships have shrunk from 14 to 11 during my term as director, and this has hampered out-of-state recruitment efforts. Despite excellent UNC investment returns on endowment funds, the overall amounts available for awards each year have not substantially grown. Meanwhile, some of our peers are able to offer two-year RA awards plus larger and longer scholarships. While graduate education choices should be more than matters of money, when students must decide between two closely matched MPA programs, they will likely choose the one offering the most generous financial aid package.

Looking Ahead

These challenges are formidable, and we are taking concrete actions to address them. In June the MPA faculty approved major curriculum changes to better align our course offerings with the competency expectations of employers and our accrediting agency. These changes also reduce our credit hour requirements to be consistent with those of our peers. We will next identify outcome measures and other metrics of our progress.

And we are carefully considering development of a quality online MPA option in order to bolster our impact in developing public service leaders and provide greater access to students who cannot enroll in a two-year residential program. You will find more information about the online MPA option currently under consideration on the following two pages. We are in the exploration stage, but we are also excited at the prospect of expanding the reach of our program in order to make a greater contribution to the world of public service.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carl Stenberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "C" and "S".

Carl Stenberg

Online MPA?

EXPLORING A WAY TO INCREASE OUR IMPACT

Since May, incoming MPA program director Bill Rivenbark and Dean Mike Smith have been traveling around North Carolina to meet with groups of alumni. In preparation for his new role, Bill wants to hear about their careers, the challenges of their work, and their needs as alumni. The meetings have included a discussion about the possibility of adding online access to the MPA program, an idea that arose earlier this year. Below are some questions asked by alumni in these visits.

Q: *Why are you considering online access to the MPA program?*

A: Though we have explored ways over the past few years to extend the reach of the MPA program—including an executive program and PhD—these did not work out due to various constraints.

A few months ago, after UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School began developing an online MBA, one of their administrators approached Mike Smith with a suggestion that online access might be a good fit for MPA. Mike's response was what you might expect: he put the note aside, skeptical about the ability to deliver a quality program online. When Mike was contacted a second time, he listened more carefully and learned about a new approach to online education that emphasizes delivering quality content in a highly interactive online environment—a method that might provide an opportunity for increasing the impact of the MPA program.

Q: *What do you mean by impact?*

A: We know that there is a critical need for leadership in government and other areas of public service throughout our country. The nearly 900 alumni of our program offer a daily testament to the value of a Carolina MPA education, but our capacity for growth as a strictly on-campus program is limited—for many of the reasons Carl Stenberg mentions in his Director's Column on page 7.

With the addition of an online option, qualified students from across the country would be able to choose a program that fits both their life needs and their learning preferences. Highly qualified prospective public service leaders who need to continue working full-time, are in the military, or cannot move their family to North Carolina for two years would have the option of a Carolina MPA education. As MPA graduates, these individuals would make a positive impact on their

communities, wherever that may be. Governments and nonprofits throughout the country need strategic thinkers at every level, public servants who can lead us through the challenges ahead.

Q: *How would offering the program online affect students in the on-campus program?*

A: We greatly value the on-campus program. Our exploration of the online option thus far has led us to believe that the addition of an online program will enhance—not detract from—the campus experience. Interaction between students in the on-campus and online programs could be beneficial to both groups.

Q: *What is our competition doing?*

A: Many MPA programs already offer the degree online, including the University of Southern California, Penn State University, and the University of Nebraska. We are not

pioneers in this movement, but we are exploring a new approach to online education—one that maximizes student-to-student interaction, offers a seminar experience, and creates a cohort environment. No other MPA program is offering an online option of the quality that could be offered by Carolina MPA.

Q: *Will an online program lose the cohort component?*

A: We are exploring an online program where we can take advantage of technology that will help to build cohesion and foster interaction among students both in and outside of class. The system that we envision will support peer-to-peer connections beginning at orientation and continuing for many years. Connections to alumni across the country would also be possible for many online students. We recognize this would be a different kind of cohort experience than yours; however, we believe that the value of a cohort is not in how or where the connections are made, but in the connections themselves.

Q: *How will an online program be different than the existing program?*

A: If we proceed with the online option, it will be the same MPA program, offered in a different mode and to a greater number of students. This means the same curriculum and the same high level of quality.

Q: *How can I see what the online experience might look like?*

A: Because we are only in the exploratory stage, nothing has been created online for the MPA program, but you can view a video about University of Southern California's online Master of Arts in Teaching program that uses

“Governments and nonprofits throughout the country need strategic thinkers at every level, public servants who can lead us through the challenges ahead.”

Q: *What would the admission standards be for an online program?*

A: The admission standards would be the same as those for the on-campus program. We anticipate attracting the same broad range of quality students, including those who cannot participate in our on-campus program because of work constraints or family commitments.

Q: *What is the proposed timeline for an online program?*

A: If we decide to proceed with developing online access to the program, we may be able to offer the first courses as early as summer 2012.

the same technology we are considering. Visit the USC website at <http://mat.usc.edu/> to view “The MAT@USC Experience.”

Q: *What are the next steps?*

A: We will continue to exercise due diligence as we explore the possibility of an online program. If that decision is made, we will provide full details to alumni at that time.

TRUE CAROLINA BLUE: CASSELLE SMITH

By Safa Sajadi

Casselle Smith's passion for public service began in her hometown of Greensboro, North Carolina. She remembers accompanying her mother and brother to Yum Yum, a family-owned hot dog store on the UNC-Greensboro campus. Her mother, who worked at Cone Mills and was a union shop steward, would pass out union leaflets as they enjoyed the summer evenings.

Casselle draws a great deal of inspiration from her mother. "She was college-educated but forwent becoming a professor to be a labor movement activist," says Casselle. Though union organizing kept the family in what some would call "disadvantaged" circumstances, Casselle and her brother—School of Government Assistant Professor Karl Smith—always believed that they could do anything and be anything they wanted. It is that feeling of empowerment and promise that Casselle wants for "every poor kid growing up in a low-income neighborhood."

While standing by her mother's side on union blitzes in Salisbury, North Carolina, Casselle learned firsthand that "the most powerful way to organize workers was from within." That insight would prove to be useful in her future.

At Howard University, she double-majored in sociology and administration of justice and was an intern with the Public Defender Service (PDS) for the District of Columbia. As a Fellow for PDS after graduation, she found that she could make real change in the lives of

individuals who had been pushed to the margins of society. "We were not just fighting for their freedom from incarceration; we were trying to help them see beyond their distrust in a system that had failed them, and to break them out of their own entrenched disillusionment," says Casselle.

She went on to Harvard Law School because she believed that a legal education would "help me effect systemic change in the structural inequality that has plagued so many communities for generations."

At the end of her first year of law school, Casselle was granted membership in the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, the nation's oldest student-run legal services center and one of three historic honor societies at Harvard Law School. After serving as a student attorney who practiced housing law and represented indigent tenants in the Boston Housing Court, she became the organization's president.

So what drew Casselle to the MPA program? Though law school provided her with opportunities to broaden her worldview and with many useful skills, she says the MPA marries critical thinking and analysis with the skills of public management. Additionally, she says, "It is wonderful

to be involved in a school that plays such an integral part in supporting my home state. I am able to learn the hard skills of public management through the North Carolina lens."



In her spare time, Casselle likes to lift weights, an activity she describes as pushing through the weakness to find strength. "If poverty were eradicated tomorrow," she says, "I might leave public service and become a personal trainer."

Casselle Smith received the 2010–2011 Diversity in Public Service Scholarship.

Your Gifts at Work

2010-2011 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Tyler Thomas
Ronald Aycock Scholarship



Suzanne Julian
Jean Coble Scholarship



Alex Terry
Ed Kitchen Scholarship



Casselle Smith
Diversity in Public Service
Scholarship



Ashley Barriga
Preyer Family Scholarship



Emily Leik
John Gold Scholarship



Dwane Brinson
North Carolina Local
Government Scholarship



Libby Hodges
Betsy Stafford Scholarship



Michelle Hall and Gus Carvalho
Rothwell Scholarship



Pictured left to right (front row): Ellie Blake, Danielle Peacock, Amanda Kaufman, Jennifer Butler. Pictured left to right (back row): Cooper Strickland, Kevin Bryant, Michael Ousdahl, Melvin McDermott III, Kevin McLaughlin, Francinia McKeithan
Nanette Mengel Scholarship

Not shown: Kate Mulvaney, Tan Ngo, Katie Sirakos



Scott Sherrill and Manal Khan
Hayman-Howard-Wright Scholarship

Not shown: Laura Biediger, Nicholas Geis, Stephen Moore, Erik Osborne, Cristal Perkins, Michael Smallwood, Amanda Stafford

Photos by
Douglas Pitts Photography

Life Events

On the Move

Shelle Wheless Altieri '92 has formed a protocol and etiquette consulting business after many years of working in state government. She and her family are moving to Brussels, Belgium, this summer.

Ashley Barriga '09 has accepted the position of human resources analyst with Chatham County, North Carolina.

Mike Branum '03 has been named fire chief of the Fort Mojave Mesa Fire Department in Arizona.

Dwane Brinson '09 is tax administrator for Lee County, North Carolina.

Lukas Brun '07 was promoted to senior research analyst at Duke University. He will attend North Carolina State University's part-time PhD program beginning this fall.

Andrea Cain '06 has joined the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Millie Cox '72 is retiring as director of international studies at Charlotte Country Day School and as honorary consul of France, a position she has held for 20 years.

Victoria Cunningham '07 is a contract specialist with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, National Institutes of Health, in Research Triangle Park. She is president-elect of the RTP chapter of the National Contract Management Association.

Ben Eisner '05 has accepted a position as associate attorney with Oliver, Friesen, and Cheek PLLC in New Bern.

Thomas Gaunt, SJ '83 was appointed executive director and research professor at Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate in Washington, DC.

Jennifer Golynsky '88 has been doing human resource consulting in Charlotte but recently relocated to Atlanta, Georgia, where her husband accepted a new position.

Michelle Hall '09 is a research and policy associate with the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission.

Carrie Henderson '08 began a new job as coordinator of student success for the Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges. She is still a part-time PhD student in higher education administration at Florida State University.

John Honeycutt '05 graduated from the University of Tennessee College of Law and is practicing administrative and employment law for Penn Stuart & Eskridge in Abingdon, Virginia.

Christi Hurt '96 is working with Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina on a grant from the Ms. Foundation for Women to develop a comprehensive plan to prevent child sexual abuse in North Carolina. The project will result in a statewide, evidence-based plan to increase collaborative efforts to prevent child sexual abuse, with an emphasis on sex offender management in communities.

Kendra Jensen '09 has accepted a position as research analyst for the Tennessee Housing Development Agency in Nashville.

Jonathan Jordan '96 was elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives to represent Ashe and Watauga counties.

Ted Kaplan '01 is assistant city attorney with the City of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Amanda Kaufman '09 was selected for a post-graduate management internship with the City of Olathe, Kansas.

Erin Schwie Langston '03 has relocated from Texas to North Carolina and has accepted a position as finance and administrative operations director with the Orange County Health Department.

Melvin McDermott III '09 will serve as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer in Pembroke, North Carolina.

Francinia McKeithan '09 has accepted a state policy fellowship with the Mississippi Economic Policy Center.

Kevin McLaughlin '09 has accepted a position with the US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Air Quality Planning & Standards, Sector Programs & Policies Division in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.

Lydia Newman '09 has returned full-time to her position as community relations coordinator with the Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Durham, North Carolina.

Kimberly (Pearson) Oliver '95 was promoted to the position of executive assistant to the Charlotte city manager for constituent relations, where she is responsible for a three-member team serving Charlotte council members.

Rochelle Small-Toney '78 was named city manager of Savannah, Georgia.

Paul Spruill '95 has resigned from his position as manager of Beaufort County, North Carolina, to become general manager and chief executive officer with Tideland Electric Membership Corp.

Cooper Strickland '09 is clerking for the Honorable Marcia Phillips Parson, a judge with the US Bankruptcy Court in Greenville, Tennessee.

James Varnado '97 was recently promoted to treasury debt manager for the City of Orlando, Florida.

Kenneth Woodcock '97 has relocated to Manassas, Virginia, with the US Air Force Reserve.

Accomplishments

Carrie Cook '07 received the Young Public Administrator Award at the Annual Marks of Excellence Banquet for the National Forum of Black Public Administrators in May.

Derrick Drakeford '00 has written *Finding Your Purpose in 15 Minutes*. He is chief executive officer of Drakeford Scott and Associates LLC in Washington, DC.

Tim Morgan '90 was elected to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education. The school system is the second largest in North Carolina, serving 135,000 students.

Danielle Peacock '09 published "Study Recommends C & D Recycling Development at Private Facilities" in the Spring 2011 issue of *Recycling Works*, a newsletter published by the Recycling Business Assistance Center in Raleigh.

Marriages

Lukas Brun '07 and Erin Branch were married on May 14, 2011.

Sonya Smith '98 married Michael Hohlt on March 12, 2011, in Brenham, Texas.

New Arrivals

Jessica Aylor '05 and her husband, David, welcomed Henry Banks Aylor on March 30, 2011.

Katie Burdett '07 and her husband, Neel Mukherjee, announce the birth of a daughter, Inara May Burdett-Mukherjee, on February 26, 2011.

MPA Admissions Coordinator **Susan Lynch** and her husband, Derek, are celebrating the birth of a daughter, Riley Abigail, on March 24, 2011.

Daniel Newman '98 and his wife, Julie, announced the birth of Avi Joseph Newman on March 18, 2011.

Kathryn Rooney '03 and her husband, Iain Young, announce the birth of their daughter, Davanie Marie Young, born on August 27, 2010.

Leslie Scott '89 and her husband, Crawford Dunham, adopted a daughter, Pavlina, from an orphanage in western Ukraine in 2010. Pavlina turned 10 years old in May and is in third grade.

Rebekah Temple '07 and her husband, Jack, announce the birth of their son, Quinn Alexander Temple, on February 9, 2011.

James Varnado '97 and his wife, Monica Rivas Varnado, welcomed twins Kaitlyn Gail and Aiden James on January 25, 2011.

Correction

Please excuse our omission in the Spring 2011 issue: Terry Waterfield '08 is a member of Club '66.

Carl Stenberg to receive ICMA's Sweeney Academic Award

MPA Director **Carl Stenberg** will receive the International City/County Management Association's Stephen B. Sweeney Academic Award at ICMA's annual conference in September. The award "recognizes a classroom instructor who has made a significant contribution to the formal education of students pursuing careers in local government." Carl was nominated by Tom Lundy, manager, Catawba County, and Julie Brenman, former budget director and assistant city manager for the City of Durham.

The nomination states, "Whether it's formal education for graduate students or continuing

education for public officials trying to enhance their careers, [Carl] helps his students find their way in local government. He connects students with professionals, and professionals with each other."

The nomination also emphasized his "understanding of the rigors and challenges facing public officials, and his interest in helping public leaders do their jobs most effectively," and his work in developing and directing the School of Government's Public Executive Leadership Academy (PELA) as examples of his helping to bridge the gap between academics and practitioners.

The Power of Networking

After graduating in 2005, Erin Schwie Langston moved from Charlotte to Texas, where she worked in the city manager's office and later became assistant director of building management services for the City of Dallas. In October 2010, she and her husband, Bill, began thinking about moving back to North Carolina. Although she was working full-time and parenting two young children, Erin put "networking" near the top

of her to-do list. Six months later, she accepted a position as finance and administrative operations director for the Orange County Health Department.

"As a student, I did not realize the full value of School of Government faculty and its outreach into local government, nor the extent of the MPA alumni network," Langston says. "Since I knew before graduation that

I was relocating to Texas, I did not focus my post-graduation networking efforts in North Carolina. My transition back to the state has been much smoother than expected, with the assistance of the MPA alumni network, the program, and Jean Coble in particular."

The following timeline gives a snapshot of Langston's focused and effective networking strategy.

- October 2010** Early discussions about relocation opportunity in the Charlotte area through husband's company. Started reconnecting with NC contacts. Not actively looking for a job. Still working full time.
- November 2010** Attended Public Administration Conference in Chapel Hill. Subscribed to the MPA Job Czar's listserv. Quietly looking for a job. Still working full time.
- December 2010** Started paying more attention to NC government/politics through online news outlets and political blogs.
- January 2011** Husband accepted job in the Research Triangle Park area. Resigned from assistant director position with City of Dallas. Notified North Carolina connections of the move and upcoming job search.
- February 2011** Husband moved. Officially became full-time stay-at-home mom (talk about major transitions!). Active relocation activities: put house on market, started packing, etc. Active job search begun with desired start date of Summer 2011. Joined MPA Alumni Association.
- March 2011** Attended Young Professionals Leadership Institute at the ICMA Southeast Regional Meeting in Asheville for professional development and regional networking. Met several MPA alums. Consistently used the UNC alumni database and LinkedIn to find MPA connections to job vacancies. Often e-mailed/spoke with MPA alums about the culture of organizations in order to make an educated choice about applying.
- April 2011** Attended MPA Capstone Conference to learn and network. Interviewed with alumni and faculty when in town. Asked MPA contacts to arrange them as well. Continued to actively use MPA alumni network. Scheduled "meet and greets" with fellow alumni and asked contacts to arrange meetings with alumni and School faculty. **Accepted the position of finance and administrative operations director with Orange County Health Department.**
- May 2011** Moved to North Carolina with children in early May. Started new job.
- June 2011** Attended informal gathering of MPA women. Continue to establish RTP-based networks.



Erin Schwie Langston used effective networking to find a new job when she relocated to North Carolina from Texas.

Erin Schwie Langston's Networking Tips

- Create and use a profile on LinkedIn
- Use the UNC Alumni Database
- Work to keep an active network
- Develop default "go to" questions for meet-and-greets
- Don't be afraid to ask for a connection, reference, etc.
- Look for organizations or jobs or people that are interesting to you and find out how people got where they are (skills, luck, etc.)
- Send thank-you notes
- Always be on the lookout for connections (school, church, neighbors, etc.)

Students Blog about Summer Internships

Five MPA students are blogging about their 2011 summer internships on the MPA Student Blog.

Check out the blog at sogweb.sog.unc.edu/blogs/mpa to read these and other posts:

“Infrastructure, Implementation, and Evaluation: State Agency Buzzwords”

Angel Banks recounts her meetings with officials of the NC Department of Public Instruction, including notes about her report on a recent teacher effectiveness study.

“Helping Small Businesses Help Themselves”

Molly Boyle’s account of a communications training session she attended, where she did not hear the rules she had expected: “Don’t be rude, don’t be late, don’t be smelly.”

“The One Where I Do Donuts in a Fire Boat”

Gus Carvalho’s account of a day with the Charlotte Fire Department Training Division.

“Everyone Loves Libraries”

A blog post about performance indicators for the Wake County Public Libraries took Manal Kahn down memory lane, recalling childhood experiences at the Chicago Public Library and the lack of access to a library during her time as a middle-school student in Pakistan.

“Tweet This”

Stephen Moore blogs about social media and its intersection with state government from his perspective as an intern with Speaker Thom Tillis of the NC General Assembly.

Sign up at sogweb.sog.unc.edu/blogs/mpa to receive an e-mail alert when new posts are added to this blog.



Angel Banks
NC Department of
Public Instruction, Financial
& Business Services Division



Molly Boyle
Green Plus, a program of
the nonprofit Institute for
Sustainable Development in
Research Triangle Park



Gus Carvalho
City of Charlotte Budget &
Evaluation Office



Manal Khan
Wake County Department of
Community Services



Stephen Moore
Office of the Speaker of the
NC House of Representatives



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IMPACT

Save the Date

AUGUST 27, 2011

Alumni Picnic

6:00 p.m.
School of Government

For details, contact Jean Coble at coble@sog.unc.edu or 919.962.0426.

NOVEMBER 3-4, 2011

Public Administration Conference

School of Government

The Deil Wright Lecture will be delivered by Erskine Bowles, co-chair of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. Bowles is the former president of the UNC system and former White House chief of staff for President Bill Clinton.

NOVEMBER 3, 2011

Retirement Dinner for Gordon Whitaker

For details, visit www.pac.edu

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