March 9, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MPA Alumna Receives Graduate Education Advancement Board’s Impact Award for Capstone Thesis

CHAPEL HILL, NC – Johanna Foster, a 2007 graduate of the MPA program, has been selected as a recipient of the Graduate Education Advancement Board’s Impact Award in recognition of her capstone thesis addressing equity in criminal justice. The Impact Award, presented by the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School, recognizes “graduate students whose research provides special benefits to the citizens of North Carolina.” Foster’s capstone paper was titled, “Striving for Equity in Criminal Justice: An Analysis of Variability of Bail Bonds in the Tenth Judicial District of North Carolina.”

In recommending Foster for the Impact Award, Maureen Berner, associate professor at the School of Government and chair of Foster’s thesis committee, said that Foster’s research, while controversial, had a “dramatic and immediate impact on judicial policy in Wake County and, by example and extension, led to reconsideration of judicial policies throughout the state.” Berner explained that Foster chose a topic that had not yet been explored in public policy, public administration, political science, or criminal justice literature. “She worked closely with the Odum Institute on her methodology, gathered extensive data, spent over a year verifying and cleaning data, and frankly, produced the most solid thesis I have supervised in 10 years,” Berner said.

Foster is the first MPA recipient of this honor, which typically is awarded to Ph.D. students. She has been invited to share her research during UNC-Chapel Hill’s 11th Annual Graduate School Student Recognition Celebration, to be held April 20 at the George Watts Hill Alumni Center.

Currently, Foster is program manager for Wake County Community Services.

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