



Public SPAAce

A Newsletter for Friends of the Western Michigan University
School of Public Affairs and Administration



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**School of Public Affairs
and Administration**
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Mission: The School of Public Affairs and Administration is committed to improving the quality of public and nonprofit service. In a diverse and inclusive community, the mission of the School of Public Affairs and Administrations is to provide learning and discovery opportunities which advance the knowledge and use of professional ethics, best theories, policies, and practices for public and nonprofit organizations in order to create and support societies for respect, liberty, justice and equality.

Message from the SPAA Director



What a year it has been for the world and the human race overall! The Covid-19 pandemic has turned things upside down globally, causing a major blow to the lifestyle that all of us have grown accustomed to. The way we go out, carryout our lives every day, interact with each other, and work has changed. This change has had enormous implications for businesses

across many sectors of the economy from tourism, travel, and entertainment to retail, health care, and social services.

Education is one of the many sectors directly impacted by the pandemic. The tactical move of all in-person classes to online learning as a short-term fix over the last spring has emerged as the mainstay of educational delivery now. Given the history of using remote learning and online modes of delivery for decades, higher education has adapted to this evolving environment with minimal disruption. But nowhere has this transformation been quicker than in delivering professional programs like in public administration and policy, where many professional students have welcomed the move to online delivery.

Such has also been the case with the programs at our School. Whereas many courses in the Master of Public Administration program were already offered partly online, the move to almost 100 percent online delivery has been relatively seamless. All of the teaching and learning activities, including class discussions, presentations, and projects, have moved online, some synchronously and others with a combination of asynchronous activities. But this move has also applied to the Bachelor of Science program in Public and Nonprofit Administration, which the School has launched this fall.

Yet, there are challenges. The enormous preparation that needs to be done at the front end of course delivery and the need to move to a very different pedagogical practice has taken a major toll on faculty workload and research productivity. Students accustomed to an in-person learning environment have struggled with the online mode where one's confidence in using technological know-how makes a major difference. While the evolving technology seeks to replicate major components of interactive learning, limitations apply to many important aspects of social learning including professional networking and informal support systems. Feeling technologically challenged, many students have also opted to sit out certain semesters, delaying their graduation entirely. Some of our professional students have also faced layoffs and terminations in their career, with a deep level of anxiety in life and academic plans. The

uncertainty caused by the pandemic has led many prospective students contemplating graduate studies to postpone their plans until greater normalcy.

The global havoc caused by the pandemic has only elevated relevance of the kind of education the School provides, focusing on improving the quality of public service. As the pandemic has taken an enormous toll on people's lives and livelihoods at a scale unparalleled in our recent memory, governments around the world are pouring resources to minimize its impact. No doubt, the pandemic has brought to light the social and economic inequality ingrained in society throughout generations and even increasing over time as the poor and vulnerable are having to sacrifice the most. But the health risks associated with Covid-19 have once again elevated the role of governments in advancing medical research as well as introducing and enforcing policies to alter the behavior of citizens in ways not witnessed in the recent past. Nowhere has its impact been more significant in making the case that universal health coverage must be the top priority to protect everyone from imminent health risks.

It is this newfound universal context in which we are sharing this Fall 2020 edition of Public SPAAce. It highlights the School's major activities and accomplishments from last year. On a programmatic note, the School has just started the much-awaited Bachelor of Science program in Public and Nonprofit Administration, with separate minors in Public Administration and Nonprofit Administration. While the enrollment during its first year is low (seven currently, with 40 between the UG major and minors) owing in part to its launch in the middle of the pandemic, we expect this professionally-oriented, liberal arts degree program to generate significant interest whether as the sole major or as a second major.

In the year 2019/20 ending in spring, the MPA program graduated 31 students and admitted 26 students. More currently, a total of 33 students were admitted into the program during the 2020 cycle ending this fall, with close to 100 students currently active. The Ph.D. program has not had any new students in the past two annual admission cycles following the decision to entirely hold its admission. At this point, the future of this program remains uncertain given major resource limitations that have been further accelerated due to the pandemic.

On a separate note, I would like to congratulate Dr. Robert Peters on his retirement! While we have lost a dedicated faculty, the many positive impacts he has left on the School and its programs and larger community are there to stay.

With best regards,

Udaya R. Wagle, Ph.D.

Professor and Director, School of Public Affairs and Administration

2020 SPAA Outstanding Alumni Award

Congratulations to Robert Lewis Trezise, Jr. (MPA '94) for winning the 2020 SPAA Outstanding Alumni Award! This award was presented at an award ceremony held over Webex on October 30, where he also received the Alumni Achievement Award from the College of Arts and Sciences. What follows is the text from his nomination, highlighting his impressive professional records and accomplishments.

Mr. Robert (Bob) Trezise, Jr., received a Master of Public Administration degree from WMU in 1994. Bob is also a graduate of James Madison College at Michigan State University.



He began his career as an economic development coordinator with the Delta Township in Michigan. Having gained in-depth insights and experience in the areas of economic development, Bob went on to serve as the vice president of Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce (1999-2001), Managing Director of the Community Assistance Team at Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MDEC, 2001-2006), and President and Chief Executive Officer of Lansing Economic Development Corporation (LEDC, 2006-2011), before leading the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) as its President and CEO in 2011.

Among the most impactful accomplishments of Mr. Trezise's while at MDEC included developing downtown projects from Detroit and Grand Rapids to Marquette and Traverse City, creating and managing strategic plans and blueprints for many Michigan communities, and managing programs under the Community Development Block Grant and other initiatives. His tenure at the LEDC included managing over \$800 million in private sector projects creating over 3,000 jobs in Lansing. His leadership at LEAP expanded this reach, initiating and managing award-winning projects with a combined impact of \$3.1 billion in new economic development, creating 7,100 direct private-sector jobs and landing three Fortune 500 companies in 2019 alone.

Bob is a strategic thinker with an impeccable record of follow-throughs in the area of economic development, growth, and vitality in Michigan. An anonymous nominator put his expertise and impact succinctly: "Bob has been and continues to be a vocal advocate for regional cooperation and development. He perceives the "big picture" clearly and pursues them...Bob is a proponent of public-private partnerships, and his accomplishments show that he knows how to implement them."

His many accomplishments have been recognized with local, national, and international awards, including from the Capital Area Michigan Works!, Michigan Economic Developer's Association, Economic Consultant Connect, and International Economic Development Council.

He currently serves on the boards of a variety of organizations, including Capital Area Michigan Works!, Collaborative Development Council (CDC), Downtown Lansing Revitalization Blue Ribbon Committee, Lansing Community Foundation, Arts Council of Greater Lansing, Michigan Economic Developers Association, WKAR TV and Radio Community, Lansing State Journal Editorial Advisory Council, Lansing Rotary Club, Downtown Lansing Inc., and Michigan State University James Madison College Board of Visitors. He is also a published poet.

Bob embraces the mission of the School of Public Affairs and Administration—improving the quality of public and nonprofit service—and demonstrates an unwavering commitment to the School's core public service values—the common good, democratic governance and liberty, ethical leadership, decision-making and administrative practice, advocacy for social justice, and plurality of ideas and perspectives.

It is our distinct honor and privilege to recognize Mr. Trezise's many accomplishments and public service impact with the Outstanding SPAA Alumni Award for 2020. Congratulations!

Academic Programs Update

The academic year 2020/2021 at SPAA started with major changes in the undergraduate and MPA programs. The hard work of the faculty with extensive consultation with students, alumni, and prospective employers has now materialized in creating and offering the Bachelor of Science program with a major in Public and Nonprofit Administration. This also coincides with a major revision of the MPA curriculum that was operationalized in the past two years. These initiatives have significantly expanded the portfolio of SPAA academic programs.

Revised MPA Program



The revision of the NASPAA-accredited MPA program now follows a more consistent, current, and relevant curriculum, incorporating the ongoing developments and practices in the field of public administration and policy. The extensive exercise of assessment, analysis, and planning, for example, has led to revising or adding courses that specifically address the core competencies in leadership and management as well as the public policy process. The program requirements have been more consistent across the core, required-concentration, and elective courses. Given the increasing interest of current and prospective students, the program now provides a concentration in Public Policy. Many topically relevant elective courses have been added, offering greater flexibility across concentrations. While the program's breadth and depth have been expanded, the overall program requirement has been reduced to 39 credits hours (36 for in-career students). The program is also transitioning into a portfolio-based sequence of courses

for its capstone requirement that focuses on a reflective exercise rather than the project-based exercise applied historically. The approach and contents of the revised program more closely align with the mission of the MPA program: "to improve the quality of public service by developing professionals and leaders equipped with knowledge and skills in theories, methodology, and innovative practice in the interdisciplinary field of public administration." The detailed program requirements with concentration and elective coursework are provided on the SPAA website: <https://wmich.edu/spaa/academics/mpa/general>.

The complete transition into this revised curriculum is sure to take some time. However, it is essential to note that the faculty advisors are adopting a very high degree of flexibility so that students can pursue their customized program plans without losing a single credit they have already earned.

Bachelor of Science in Public and Nonprofit Administration

Capitalizing on its long history of offering an undergraduate minor in Nonprofit Leadership, SPAA now offers courses for an entirely new Bachelor of Science degree program with a major in Public and Nonprofit Administration. The field of public administration is very interdisciplinary, and therefore students in this program are given the choice to pursue either the Public Administration or the Nonprofit Administration track, depending on their career goals. The program's 33 credit-hour requirement is divided into a highly interdisciplinary cognate courses of nine credit hours, core courses of 15 credit hours, three credit hours of the capstone or professional experience, and six credit hours of electives. Students can pursue this program as their only major or as a second major, depending on their interest and career needs. The mission of the BSPNA program is "to improve the

quality of public service by developing a workforce equipped with knowledge and skills for service in the public and nonprofit sectors." Please refer to the program website (<https://wmich.edu/spaa/academics/undergraduate-minor/bs>) for more detail on the program requirements, coursework involved, and track choices.

The program also allows students with some interest in the public and/or nonprofit sector to minor in either Public Administration or Nonprofit Administration. These two minors require a total of 18 credit hours of coursework divided into nine credit hours of core courses, three credit hours of capstone or professional experience, and six credit hours of elective courses.

Academic Programs Update (Cont)

Accelerated Graduate Degree Program (AGDP) in Public Administration

The SPAA faculty also hopes to launch the AGDP program in public administration in the fall of 2021. Currently under review, this AGDP option allows undergraduate students in the BSPNA program to pursue the MPA degree with reduced coursework. Specifically, students with junior standing can begin the MPA coursework (at the 5000 or 6000 level) as a part of their BSPNA program to transfer up to 12 credit hours into their MPA degree. These transferable credits can lower the MPA program requirements to 24 credits (27 in case of pre-career students).

SPAA Public Service Engagement Series

Monthly, the School hosts the Public Service Engagement Series by bringing practitioners and academics together for broader learning through exchange of ideas, insights, and experiences. This offers experienced professionals and practitioners an opportunity to share their experiences in addressing emerging issues and problems in the nonprofit, healthcare, and public sectors. The initial presentation focused on specific issues or problems serve as a vehicle to engage students, alumni, faculty, staff, and other community participants in a format that facilitates forward-thinking and problem-solving.

The series is designed for rich and lively discussions and hosted at 5 PM on the second Wednesday/Thursday of every month beginning in September and ending in April (except for December). Since the Covid-19 pandemic stopped on-campus activities last spring, these events have been hosted via Webex.

Here is a list of speakers with their presentation titles that the School hosted during the past year (this list and select recorded presentation videos are available at the School's events page: <https://wmich.edu/spaa/events>). Please also note that the School welcomes your ideas and nominations for future speakers.



Jeff Patton, Chief Executive Officer, Integrated Services of Kalamazoo (ISK)
(February 12, 2020)

Title: **Frontline Prescription for Meeting Unlimited Need with Limited Resources**



Robert L. Trezise, Jr., President and CEO, Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP)
(October 14, 2020)

Title: **Effectiveness of Economic Development and it's Future in our Communities**



Laura Lam, Deputy City Manager, City of Kalamazoo
(March 11, 2020)

Title: **Navigating the Gauntlet of Pubic Participation**



Adrian Vazquez, Executive Director of el Concilio Kalamazoo
(November 11, 2020)

Title: **Understanding the Latinx Community Needs and Overcoming Challenges in Difficult Times**



Daryl Green, Chief of Police, Lansing Police Department
(September 9, 2020)

Title: **Municipal Policing Challenges in the Era of COVID-19 and George Floyd**

SPAA Guest Speakers

Inviting accomplished professionals for presentation and exchange of ideas is a tradition of the SPAA faculty to provide students with an opportunity to gain direct industry insights. The SPAA community thanks the following guest speakers for their presentations and help in teaching various courses.

Dr. Thomas C. Bailey, WMU faculty member (PADM 5990, Spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. White)

Ms. Nicol Brown, Executive Director, St. Joseph Housing Commission (PADM 5990/PSCI 6000, Fall 2019, Faculty: Dr. Hoffman)

Mr. Nathan Dannison, Senior Pastor, First Congregational Church (PADM 5870, Fall 2019, Faculty: Ms. Jach)

Ms. Anne Gaertner, The Arc Community Advocates (PADM 4950, spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. Edwards)

Ms. Jennifer Goulet, Former President and CEO, Creative Many Michigan (PADM 6441, spring 2020, Faculty: Mr. Simon)

Ms. Heather Haigh, Board Chair, YWCA of Kalamazoo (PADM 6400, spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. Purnell)

Ms. Mary Harper, Board of Directors, Kalamazoo Community Foundation (PADM 6400, spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. Purnell)

Ms. Diana E. Hernández, Director, WMU Multicultural Affairs (PADM 5990, Spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. White)

Ms. Stephanie Hoffman, Executive Director, Open Doors Kalamazoo (PADM 5990/PSCI 6000, Fall 2019, Faculty: Dr. Hoffman)

Ms. Stephanie Hoffman, Executive Director, Open Doors Kalamazoo (PADM 5990, Spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. White)

Ms. Stacy Jackson, Out of School Time Program Development Coach, KydNet (PADM 5990, Spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. White)

Mr. Lewis Jones, Founder/ President, Top Shelf (PADM 6441, spring 2020, Faculty: Mr. Simon)

Mr. Nick Kovach, Not for Profit Attorney (PADM 6441, spring 2020, Faculty: Mr. Simon)

Mr. James Liggins, Board Chair, Kalamazoo Defender (PADM 6400, spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. Purnell)

Mr. Matthew Lechel, Director, ONEplace@kpl (PADM 5870, Fall 2019, Faculty: Ms. Jach)

Mr. Mike McGowan, Executive Director, National Organization of Albinism and Hypopigmentation (PADM 6780, Fall 2019 and Summer 2020, Faculty: Dr. Schroeter)

Mr. Matt Milcarek, Construction Manager, Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services (PADM 5990/PSCI 6000, Fall 2019, Faculty: Dr. Hoffman)

Ms. Lindsay O'Donohue, Director of Prospect Development and Donor Relations, Kalamazoo College (PADM 5870, Fall 2019, Faculty: Ms. Jach)

Ms. Lindsey Palar, Director, WMU Diversity Education (PADM 5990, Spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. White)

Ms. Amyrillis Monet Payne, WMU undergraduate student (PADM 5990, Spring 2020, Faculty: Dr. White)

Mr. Lee Talmage, Executive Director, Battle Creek Housing Commission (PADM 5990/PSCI 6000, Fall 2019, Faculty: Dr. Hoffman)

Student and Alumni News

Congratulations to our Graduates!

NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP MINOR

Here is a list of our Nonprofit Leadership minor graduates and with their major(s).

FALL 2019

Evelia Bautista—Communication Studies

Kennedi Cummings—Interpersonal Communication

Breanna Bowyer—Gender & Women's Studies

SPRING 2020

Clarissa Corral—Sociology

Ryan Milka—Organizational Communication

Chase Latka—Envir & Sustainability Studies

Bronte Spondike—Music Performance: Instrumental

Rebecca Loser—Gender & Women's Studies

SUMMER 2020

Redacted—Public Relations

Joseph Corridor—Public Relations

Alyssa Brandt—Organizational Communication

Emma Tavalacci—Film, Video, & Media Studies

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA)

Below is a list of MPA graduates with the title of their capstone project papers.

Fall 2019

Casandra Babcock— *Child welfare worker retention within the State of Michigan.*

Erica Brenner— *A phenomenological study of leadership: Leadership development and the desire to lead.*

Susan Cook— *Effects of performance management systems on employee engagement.*

Dolores Valentina De La Cruz Pena— *The impact of government-sponsored housing projects on the quality of life of low-income people: The case of La Nueva Barquita, Dominican Republic.*

Chase Grounds— *Addressing emergency department utilization: Assessing the effects of interventions at a Michigan hospital.*

Elizabeth Haviland— *An analysis of socio-political events that may have influenced international student enrollment statistics within the United States from 1999-2019.*

Qian Yang— *Influence of Trump administration tariffs on General Motors.*

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA) CONTINUES

Spring 2020

Evangelina Alvarez—*The development disorder impact of twenty-first century anti-immigrant policies on children of immigrant parents.*

Sarah Bowlby—No project paper.

Nicholeigh V. Drake—*The impact of market factors on auto insurance premiums across states.*

Gregory Greenfield—No project paper required.

Sydney A. James—*Income share agreements: Exploration, access, and impact.*

Yolonda D. Lavender—*Philanthropy reimaged: Grantmaking and power dynamics.*

Keith W. Little—*A convergent-parallel mixed methods exploratory study and literature review of the United States labor force within the geriatric medicine and nursing healthcare sector.*

Ryan Madis—*Cybersecurity and transparency in Michigan municipalities.*

Cameron Z. Smith—*The federal trio program and its effectiveness in removing barriers to higher education for first-generation college students: A comparative case study between Western Michigan University and Kellogg Community College analysis and recommendation.*

Peter R. Wills—*The Detroit Public Schools community district: Lessons learned and relearned?*

Summer 2020

Shawna M. Allen—*Ethics in local public administration: An analysis of trends from 1990 to 2020.*

Hussein Chalabi—No project paper required.

Victoria C. Fata (Reid)—*Opioid epidemic: A look into Michigan, New Hampshire, and West Virginia's approach to the crisis.*

Allison Gwan—*Charitable giving in rural communities: Examining and overcoming challenges and barriers in nonprofit fundraising.*

Michael Hart—*Term limits and legislative staff in the Michigan House of Representatives and Senate.*

Jessica Kate Hypatidis—*Examining the extent to which social connections impacts success in living learning communities at Western Michigan University.*

Kelsey Krupp—*Living on the edge: Examining setback distances in high-risk erosion areas.*

Evan Pazkowski—*The perceived effectiveness of the South and West Washtenaw Consortium and its relation to the skills gap.*

Jodie Shaver—*Michigan's reading proficiency law and barriers to success: Why are our children falling behind?*

Meghan M. Swain-Kuch—*Adverse childhood experiences.*

Ashley Whidbee—*Public administration and crisis preparedness in Michigan cities-the cases of Flint and Kalamazoo.*

Jana M. Zollinger—*The need for a crisis nursery of Kalamazoo County.*

PHD IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Following is a list of our Ph.D. graduates with the title of their dissertation.



Mohammed Aljanahi (Fall 2019)—*Leadership, Satisfaction, Commitment, and Turnover Intention in the UAE Public Sector* (Chair: Dr. Schroeter)

Brandon Koch (summer 2020)—*Increasing Odds: The Impact of Casino Gaming Size, Location, and Economic Stream Style on County Revenue in Pennsylvania* (Chair: Dr. Peters)

Burak Onur Tan (summer 2020)—*Food Insecurity: A Closer Look at How Households Cope with Food Insecurity and How This Phenomenon Affects Their Overall Health* (Chair: Dr. Mingus)



Derik Van Baale (summer 2020)—*Ally or Enemy: The Impact of Leadership on United States Army Combat Veterans' Deployment Experiences Who Have Served in Iraq and Afghanistan* (Chair: Dr. Peters)

MPA Scholarship Awards



Congratulations to the following MPA students for winning the various scholarships and awards!

Endowed Scholarships

- Margaret and Leo Stine Endowed Memorial Scholarship: **Michael Hart** (MPA student; Spring—Summer 2020; \$4,000)
- Ravitz Scholarship: **Lindsey King** (MPA student; Summer—Fall 2020; \$3,000)
David Markham (MPA student; Fall 2020—Spring 2021; \$6,000)
Laura Worline (UG Major student; Fall 2020—Spring 2021; \$6,000)

MPA Scholar Awards:

- Best Project Paper: **Peter Wills** (Spring 2020; \$500)
- Emerging Scholar: **Rachel Swedburg** (Spring 2020; \$150)
- Organization Theory & Behavior: **Kara Purcell-Morin** (Summer 2019; \$300)
- Research Proposal: **Kara Purcell-Morin** (Fall 2019; \$300)

Experiential Projects Undertaken by SPAA Students

The following experiential projects conducted by SPAA students involved organizational data and/or data from observations or interactions from real-world settings and communication of findings back to the organizations for further action. It is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a significant disruption in the ability to carry out experiential projects involving in-person interactions, observations, or activities. The following list of experiential projects does not include MPA project papers in which students typically work with external organizations.

1. PADM 6140, Managing Community Growth and Development, is an elective course designed to provide students with an opportunity to apply specific course content in select local communities. In its spring 2020 section taught by Dr. McKay from our Lansing site, students (Samantha Bigelow, Stella Carneiro-Stephens, Reina Cooke, Michael Hart, Josh Prusik, Melvin Taylor, and Robert Zimmer) were assigned one of the following communities to study: St. Johns and Wayland, Michigan. Students talked to community leaders, including the city manager, city council members, and other community leaders and attended city council and economic development meetings. They reviewed community master plans, downtown development plans, neighborhood planning and development, and created, based upon their class readings and assignments, specific recommendations for community growth as well as ideas for recreational and economic development.



2. PADM 4950, Public and Nonprofit Administration Capstone, provides a hands-on, service-learning experience in which students draw upon the program's different content areas to solve problems and make decisions with careful attention to the relevant social, economic, environmental, and political contexts. In its spring 2020 section taught by Dr. Edwards, students (Joe Corridor, Irene Roberts, Jill Runkle, Lauren Smith, Emma Tivolacci, Malika Taylor, Breanna Turner, and Laura Worline) developed a long-term strategic plan for the Kalamazoo Refugee Resource Collaborative (KRRC), which provides supportive resources for legally placed refugees in West Michigan. Despite the interruption to the semester caused by the COVID-related shutdown, students worked diligently and developed a robust plan ahead of schedule.

Pi Alpha Alpha Induction of Students

Pi Alpha Alpha, the Global Honor Society run by NASPAA (*The Global Standard in Public Service Education*), offers life memberships to those with the highest performance levels in educational programs preparing them for public service careers. Congratulations to the following students who were inducted into this distinguished honor society through its Western Michigan University chapter.

Spring 2020 Inductees

Crystal P.E. Akinade

Shawna M. Allen

Evangelina Alvarez

Alumni News



Aaron Szarowicz (MPA, 2016): Aaron has been appointed as the Economic Development Manager for the City of Douglasville, GA.

Michael Bennett (MPA, 2018): Michael currently works as a Rating Veteran Service Representative at Veterans Benefits Administration, where he utilizes public law, code of federal regulations, case laws, policies, and manual procedures to make legal determinations for veterans claims for compensation and purposes of healthcare. He has recently accepted a new job offer as Management and Program Analyst within the Human Resource Center at VBA's Detroit Regional office.



Nathan Browning (BA, 2018): Nathan has graduated with an MA in Evaluation, Measurement, & Research from WMU. He has just started his research and evaluation practice called Kiaer Research, which works with nonprofits to measure organizational impact and improve programming.

Alumni News Continued

Kathleen Cordes (Boylan) (MPA, 2019): Kathleen is working for the state of Wisconsin's Immunization Program as a Vaccine Access Coordinator. Her role involves working closely with local public health departments in rural areas to increase access to and educate on various recommended vaccines. She is also involved in ongoing projects within the Immunization Program, including data management for the Wisconsin Immunization Registry and participating in the Covid-19 Public Education Workgroup.

Elizabeth Haviland (MPA, 2019): Elizabeth currently works as a Senior Manager of Secondary School Programs for Foreign Links Around the Globe (FLAG), which is a US-based nonprofit student exchange organization in Kalamazoo, MI.



Kevin B. Haynes (MPA, 2018): Having earned an MS in Geography after the MPA degree from WMU, Kevin serves as an Environmental GIS Manager for the Military Department in the Office of the Adjutant General for the State of South Carolina. In this position, Kevin manages spatial data for the National Guard's conservation, compliance, and cultural programs as well as the military Operations and Training program. Currently, he is also working on the statewide COVID response in South Carolina.

Yolonda Lavender (MPA, 2020): Yolonda is in her first year as the Grant Program Manager with the Stryker Johnston Foundation. She has served on the Council for Michigan Foundations Annual Conference Program Committee for the 2020 Conference, where she also presented in the session: *Hub ONE - Building a Trust-Based Collaborative to Maximize Impact and Improve Sector Health*.



Alexis Linda Lenderman (BBA, 2019): Alexis has just published her coauthored book titled [*Redefining Normal: How Two Foster Kids Beat The Odds And Discovered Healing, Happiness, and Love*](#), which seeks to help individuals with personal maturity and mental stability by developing confidence for professional goals and aspirations. Focusing on the authors' time in the foster care system, the book discusses ways to identify healthy and unhealthy habits stemming from family, friends, and romantic partners combined with changing generational patterns.

Alumni News Continued



K.P. Mahoney (Pelleran) (MPA, 2009): As the city clerk in Montague, MI, K.P. has more than tripled the number of Absentee Voters over the 2016 General Election. Her work including an interview with Jon Mills featured on WZZM TV-13 (ABC), where she talked about safe and efficient ways for voters to take advantage of early voting, generated much excitement and energy about the 2020 Election in general, convincing many to cast their votes early.

Dale Nesbary (MPA, 1981): Now in his 12th year as President of Muskegon Community College, Dr. Nesbary has been elected to serve a one-year term as Chair of the Michigan Community College Association Board of Directors. At Muskegon Community College, he has overseen a \$24 million bond authorization by Muskegon County voters and more than \$20 million in grants and private gifts to support the most ambitious upgrade of the college's facilities. He is also vice-chair of the Trinity Health System Michigan Regional Board and was selected as the 2018 Newsmaker of the Year—Education Division by the *Grand Rapids Business Journal*.



Burak Tan (Ph.D., 2020): Dr. Tan is now the program research and policy development specialist at the State of Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts in Austin, Texas.

Robert Welton (MPA, 2018): Robert started a new position as the Grants Manager with Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless in Rockville, Maryland.

Tiffany White (Ph.D., 2019): Dr. White is now the deputy director with Open Doors Kalamazoo, a non-profit organization based in Kalamazoo.

Faculty Updates

Mingus SIPO Study

Dr. Mingus' Coauthored Study Suggests Politics Outweigh Public Health Risks in Covid-19 Shelter-in-place Orders

Protests. Lawsuits. Plots to kidnap or assassinate governors. Shelter-in-place orders—SIPOs—enacted by state leaders across the country to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 have drawn both applause and criticism. Schools, restaurants, daycares, and gyms closed, and many businesses sent employees home to work or had to shut down completely. The drastic actions ignited a tug-of-war between public health and economic prosperity and between government powers and civil liberties.

With a Meader Presidential Endowment Covid-19 Response grant from the Office of Research and Innovation, Dr. Matthew Mingus' coauthored study with Dr. Kevin Corder (professor of Political Science) and Daria Blinova (graduate student) examined factors that affected the timing of SIPOs by the 50 state governors. Why did the Midwestern and some other states issue SIPOs relatively quickly while 8 states never issued a SIPO? States with measurably greater risks for COVID-19 should have enacted SIPOs more quickly than states at lower risk, and every day clearly matters with the spread of a pandemic. A total of 42 states enacted SIPOs with varying degrees of control, all within a 2 ½ week period of time.

They examined factors that *were known at the time* to have been associated with COVID-19 risk and mortality, including rates of chronic diseases, the degree of urbanization, hospital beds per capita, a major international airport in the state, and more. Also included in the analysis were the political party of the governors, the composition of the state legislatures, the percent of voters who cast ballots for President Trump in 2016, and so forth, as measures of partisan control. Their conclusion was essentially that partisan control was the key factor, and states that had both a Republican governor and Republican-controlled state senate acted one week slower than states with divided control or Democratic control. In fact, all 8 states that never issued a SIPO had both a Republican governor and state senate. Did this week delay matter? Yes!

A Columbia University research team estimated that over 50% of all COVID-19 deaths occurring before May 3, 2020, would have been prevented if social distancing and lockdowns had started just one week earlier. One week is the difference this research found based purely on the political party in control of the state. While the Columbia study was based on retrospective modeling, caseload data at the end of July is factual. The Johns Hopkins data showed that 8 months out from the WHO announcement regarding this disease emerging in Wuhan, the eight states that did not issue SIPOs had a median per capita case burden of 1,100 per 100,000 while states that did issue SIPOs had a considerably lower median burden of 900 per 100,000. While a lot of factors might account for why the US has experienced such a high caseload, the political party strongly identifies those states that never issued a shelter-in-place order and their median caseloads were 22% higher 4 months after the other 42 states had issued SIPOs.

The article published in *Policy Design and Practice* can be accessed free of charge (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/25741292.2020.1825156>) and Dr. Mingus' October 15, 2020, presentation is also available (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLBq5Re0oYc&feature=youtu.be>).



Dr. Edward's Work on Solidarity Fund @ WMU

The Solidarity Fund for WMU Employees and Students started as a grassroots effort among faculty after the COVID-19 shutdown and resulting layoffs in late March. Under Dr. Vickie Edwards' leadership, the organization was incorporated and became operational within three days, providing financial assistance to WMU staff and student workers on April 1. The founders – Dr. Edwards, Dr. Lisa Minnick, Dr. Sarah Hill, and Dr. Christopher Biggs – quickly expanded the board to include staff, students, and alumni, including a current SPAA student (Laura Worline, BSPNA '21) and a graduate of the undergraduate nonprofit program (Emily Fackler, Nonprofit Leadership minor with Certificate '18).

In the first eight months of operation, the Solidarity Fund has raised \$43,000 and distributed over \$30,000 to laid-off staff and student workers since its founding. This work continues focusing on workers who haven't found new jobs as well as staff members facing a reduction-in-hours in recent months. In planning the future of the Solidarity Fund beyond responding to COVID-19, the board of directors plans to work with students in the Public and Nonprofit Administration Capstone course as a part of their experiential learning project.



Faculty Presentations and Publications

Corder, J.K., **Mingus, M.S.**, & Blinova, D. (2020). Factors motivating the timing of COVID-19 shelter in place orders by US Governors. *Policy Design and Practice* (published online first), DOI: [10.1080/25741292.2020.1825156](https://doi.org/10.1080/25741292.2020.1825156)

Devkota, S., **Wagle, U.**, & Eklund, J. (2020). Impact of caste/ethnicity on education in Nepal: examining differences in school dropout among 5-20-year olds. *Educational Review* (published online first), DOI: [10.1080/00131911.2020.1793734](https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1793734).



Mingus, M.S. (2020). Factors Motivating the Timing of COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Orders by U.S. Governors. WMU College of Arts and Sciences and WMU Office of Research and Innovation, Webinar (October).



Schröter, D. (2020). Evaluation of sustainability for sustainability: The sustainability evaluation checklist revisited. *Zeitschrift für Evaluation*, 19(2), 291-320.

Wagle, U. (2020). The Pandemic and the Role of Governments, *PA Times*, May 27 (<https://patimes.org/the-pandemic-and-the-role-of-governments/>).

Wagle, U. (2020). Panel: Understanding the Cycle of Assessment: Data Collection, Implementation of Program Improvement and Adaptation to the Pandemic. Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) Conference, Online (October).

Wagle, U. (2020). The Pandemic and the Higher Education in the United States. Nepali Academics in America (NACA) Webinar (June).




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The SPAA acknowledges the generous financial contributions from the following individuals and institutions during the past year. As evidenced in this newsletter, these contributions have helped further the scholarly and professional accomplishments of SPAA students and faculty.

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