President’s Message

Dear Fellow Public Administrator:

Welcome to another edition of the award-winning DAPA Public Service Reader, thanks to our award-winning team of Editor Martha Narvaez and graphic designer, webmaster, and jack-of-all-trades Mark Deshon. Mark officially retired from the University of Delaware last month, which means that he can now devote all his waking hours to DAPA (just kidding…sort of). As you may know, this past March, Martha was in Las Vegas at the ASPA conference to accept ASPA’s 2012 Chapter Newsletter Award on behalf of DAPA. Julia O’Hanlon and Kelly Sherretz worked hard to put together the nomination that brought that well deserved recognition.

I’m putting the finishing touches on this column the morning after our thoroughly enjoyable Annual Awards Dinner, held on December 6 at the Deerfield Golf Club. Cimone Philpotts and Caitlin Del Collo have written a detailed piece about it for this issue, so I’ll say here only that I had a such a good time talking with our colleagues and listening to Public Service Award recipient Dr. Peter Dalleo talk that I never managed to eat my dinner! How often can you miss a meal and still feel satisfied? So I have to give a shout-out here to Julia O’Hanlon, Kathy Murphy, Cimone Philpotts, Caitlin Del Collo, and Kelly Sherretz, who put it together with help from Program Committee members Kim Gomes and Stephanie Patterson. Although I’ve learned to expect this crew to excel, I still marvel at how much they do, how well, and how cheerfully.

Just a few (well, not really so few) people I need to thank for making 2012 another successful year for DAPA. At the annual dinner we honored DAPA’s 2012 Public Service Award recipient Dr. Peter Dalleo, Clerk of the U.S. District Court for Delaware. DAPA member David Bird coordinated nominations and selection for this year’s award. We also honored Outstanding Student Public Service awardees Rachel Linstead Goldsmith and Natasha Nau. I am grateful to Jonathan Kirch (chair), Kelly Sherretz, and Lori Sitler for their service on the Outstanding Student Public Service Award committee. (I know this was a difficult assignment, because we had an extraordinarily high-quality pool of nominations this year. Students of that caliber remind me why I’m so lucky to do what I do for a living.) Martha Narvaez and Mark Deshon continued to shine as the key members of our Communications Committee, producing this newsletter, our website, and doing so many other things I don’t have space to list them. Martin Wollaston chaired our Nominations Committee, working with David Bird.

And there’s no way to thank people without calling out Jerome Lewis, who once again contributed his leadership, encouragement, human and material resources, and money while trying hard to avoid taking credit for his contributions. Sorry, Jerome, for outing you! Try again next year.

I’m also looking forward to ASPA’s national conference in New Orleans in March 2013 and the Northeast Conference on Public Administration (NECoPA) right here in Newark, Del., in November 2013. See the announcements about the 2013 conferences elsewhere in this issue.

Less exciting, but necessary, ASPA has been working with its chapters, including DAPA, to restore our lost tax-exempt status. ASPA is helping us to compile the information and prepare an application for reinstatement with
the IRS. DAPA Treasurer Martin Wollaston has been assembling the required financial information, and Cimone Philpotts put together information on our recent activities and programs, which is also required by the IRS. We’re nearly done with this and should be able to get it all submitted to the IRS by December 31, in time to take advantage of a discounted application fee.

Although superstorm Sandy forced the cancellation of DAPA’s fall networking lunch at the Wilmington Riverfront, we’re looking forward to going ahead with a Dover networking lunch in the spring. Last year’s event was great fun, and I enjoyed the mixed blessing of seeing more DAPA friends and colleagues in the room than I was able to talk with in the time allotted. I’ll talk faster this time! We’re also planning another career brown-bag session and other activities for the spring. As always, if you have ideas for programs or any other ideas about DAPA, we would love to hear from you. We’ll certainly try to put you to work, too, and I can tell you from experience that it’s a rewarding way to spend some time helping to advance public service in Delaware.

**DAPA ELECTION RESULTS**

The results of our elections are in for a new DAPA President, First Vice President, and three Council members at-large. Kathy Murphy will be our President for 2013-2014, and Jonathan Kirch our First Vice President for 2013-2014. Elected to at-large DAPA Council seats for 2013-2014 were William “BJ” DeCoursey, Eugene Dvornick, and Martha Narvaez. They will join continuing Treasurer Martin Wollaston, and continuing Councilors at-large David Bird and Kelly Sherretz.

Jonathan Justice, PhD
President
2012 DAPA Annual Awards Dinner

On December 6, 2012, Deerfield Golf Club (Newark, Del.) once again served as a sophisticated venue for the Delaware Association for Public Administration (DAPA) 2012 Awards Dinner. The event began at 5:30 p.m. with champagne and hors d’oeuvres, allowing professionals and students in the field of public administration the time to network and fellowship with one another.

DAPA President Jonathan Justice was the master of ceremonies for the event, and he welcomed the group on behalf of DAPA. Justice thanked everyone for coming, as well as the event organizers—DAPA members Julia O’Hanlon, Kathy Murphy, Kelly Sherretz and University of Delaware School of Public Policy & Administration students Cimone Philpotts and Caitlin Del Collo. He announced that DAPA will be hosting ASPA’s Northeast Conference on Public Administration next fall, and DAPA will be seeking volunteers to make this event a successful event. His opening remarks were followed by a delectable dinner.

After dinner, Justice conducted the organizational business. He announced the results of this year’s elections. The following officers have been elected for the 2013-2014 term:

- Kathy Murphy, President
- Jonathan Kirch, First Vice President
- Gene Dvornick, Council
- Martha Narvaez, Council
- William “BJ” DeCoursey, Council

After the organizational business was concluded, Justice proceeded with the awards ceremony. He first introduced Jonathan Kirch, First Vice President–Elect, who introduced and presented Natasha Nau and Rachel Linstead with the 2012 Outstanding Student Public Service Awards. Traditionally, only one such award is given each year; however, the Council was unable to pick just one recipient, as both have made impressive contributions to the field of public service.

Natasha Nau is an MPA candidate focusing on public management and policy. She was recognized for her work in Virginia, Arizona, and London Grove Township (West Grove), Pa., where she will serve as chief of finance upon completion of her studies at the University of Delaware this month. Nau’s dedication to public service is also evident from her involvement in her local fire company and in local management in the areas of personnel, finance, and administration. Nau thanked the DAPA Council for this recognition.
Rachel Linstead is an MPA candidate concentrating in healthy policy and program and policy development. She was recognized for her efforts to improve public health services for both Delawareans and Philadelphians. Linstead has produced strong results in and received acknowledgement for her work at nonprofit health organizations, including Delaware’s largest federally qualified health center, Westside Family Healthcare, where she interned this past summer. Linstead also thanked the Council for the being chosen to receive this award.

Justice then introduced At-Large Councilmember David Bird, Clerk of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the district of Delaware. Bird shared with the group how he first met this event’s keynote speaker and 2012 Public Service Award winner, Dr. Peter Dalleo, and commented on how Dalleo has served as a mentor to him. After his remarks, Bird asked Dalleo to come up and accept the award.

Dalleo is also a Clerk for the U.S. District of Delaware, and will be retiring on December 31, 2012. He earned a Ph.D. in African history at Syracuse in 1975 and held a series of governmental and non-governmental appointments over the years, working in Kenya, Ethiopia, the Bahamas, New York, and Delaware. He was also the head of the history department at the Tatnall School for eight years and served as acting headmaster for one year. Dalleo joined the court in 1995.

In his address Dalleo noted that, while he was getting his Ph.D. at Syracuse, neither he nor any of his professors could have imagined the career path that he has taken. He said that his career has been circular, and he joked that now that he is retiring he will probably return to doing speaking engagements about history. He also spoke to the attitude that has best helped him in the field of public service, which is, “How can I help you?” rather than, “Do I have to help you?” His many years of service in various settings are impressive to the say the least, and it was inspiring and a privilege to hear him speak about his tenure.

The evening concluded with more networking and fellowship.

—by DAPA members Caitlin Del Collo and Cimone Philpotts

photos by Julia O’Hanlon
University of Delaware Faculty and Students Make Presentations at NECoPA

Two faculty and four students from the University of Delaware’s School of Public Policy & Administration made presentations at the Northeast Conference on Public Administration (NECoPA), which was held in Boston on November 2-3, 2012. The theme of the Conference this year was “Public Administration in a Time of Change: Emerging Challenges and Solutions.” About 150 practitioners, faculty, and students attended the two-day conference and UD was well represented.

Faculty member Dr. John McNutt, who also serves on the Conference Proposal Review Committee, moderated a panel on “Civil Society and Government in a Technological Society” and presented a paper titled “Comparing Social Media Strategies of Lawmakers and State-Level Advocacy Groups.”

Dr. Jonathan Justice moderated a panel of presentations on “Fiscal Stress and Crisis in Local Governments” as well as presenting a paper entitled, “Making Sense of the City Manager’s Response to the 2008 Fiscal Crisis.”

MPA student Cimone Philpotts (pictured with Justice) participated on this panel with Justice and discussed “Best Practices for Municipal Bankruptcy.” Cimone also made a poster presentation on “Fiscal Policy in Costa Rica.”

MPA student Rachel Linstead made a presentation on her paper, “State Government Utilization of Mobile Device Applications,” as part of a panel discussion on “Information Technology in the Public Sector.”

PhD student David Carter presented a paper titled “Pale Shades of Green-Environmental Interest Groups and Their Efforts to Improve Environmental Policy in Delaware” as part of a panel discussion on “Influence of Politics and Institutions on Public Administration.”

PhD student David Bird made a poster presentation on “Shared Services: A Cost-Containment Method for Governmental Agencies.”

—by David Bird

photo by David Bird
Conference Announcements

The American Society for Public Administration will hold its 2013 Annual Conference from March 15-19, 2013, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside, 2 Poydras Street, New Orleans, La. The theme for the 2013 conference is “Governance and Sustainability: Local Concerns, Global Challenges.” This is likely to be an excellent conference, and the hotel is within easy walking distance of the French Quarter. I recommend this as a conference well worth attending. Early-bird registration rates are available through January 14 at www.aspanet.org/public/Conference/CONFERENCE_HOME/Conference/Home.aspx.

Even more exciting, the 4th Northeast Conference on Public Administration (NECoPA) will be coming to Newark, Del., in early November, 2013. I participated in the third NECoPA, hosted last month by the University of Massachusetts–Boston, and Suffolk University, and it was outstanding. Even more than the national ASPA conference, this regional conference gives students and practitioners an opportunity to participate in panels and roundtable sessions on an equal footing with us pointy-headed professors. I have to say that I learned quite a lot in Boston, not least from the large delegation of DAPA members who gave presentations, including graduate student members David Bird, Rachel Linstead Goldsmith, and Cimone Philpotts and my fellow pointy-head John McNutt.

—by Jonathan Justice
Seoul Field Trip

For the third consecutive year, I had the privilege of leading six University of Delaware graduate students on the Seoul Field Trip, sponsored by the Seoul Metropolitan Government. This year, MPA students and DAPA members Natasha Nau, Steve Ottinger, and Cimone Philpotts participated, as did graduate students Hannah Beesley, Kechen Lin, and Yingying Zeng. The University of Delaware’s School of Public Policy & Administration is one of a dozen U.S. graduate schools participating in the program. Joining us for the October 19-28 field trip were faculty and graduate students from Cornell University, Portland State University, and the University of Central Florida.

As in previous years, highlights of the trip included a visit to the Dasan 120 call center (the U.S. equivalent of 311), Mount Namsan, the World Cup Soccer Stadium, the World Cup park built atop a towering former landfill, the Mapo resource-recovery plant, the Transportation Operations Information System (TOPIS) center, and a tour of the Han River, in addition to a range of presentations by city officials and other experts. We also got to see some very interesting things for the first time, including the magnificent new National Museum of Korea, where we received a private tour by the head docent, and the brand new high-tech City Hall building, which opened only a few days before we arrived.

We also attended the annual meeting of the Seoul International Business Advisory Council, a group of international business managers and other experts who give the Mayor advice on how Seoul can stay at the global forefront. The SIBAC meeting came with a special treat: the students got to meet and talk with Seoul’s Mayor Park Won Soon during a break in the proceedings. As it happened, Mayor Park had been elected during an off-cycle by-election during our October 2011 trip to Seoul, after his predecessor, two-term Mayor Oh Se-hoon resigned. Mayor Park has introduced a number of policy shifts since taking office, including a sharp turn toward emphasizing social welfare, illustrated by the vision statement, “Seoul Created Jointly with Citizens, Enjoyed Together by Citizens.”

This doesn’t mean, however, that Seoul under Mayor Park is abandoning its commitment to being a leading global city, however. On the contrary, Mayor Park’s page on the Seoul city website issues the invitation, “Come to Seoul, Do Your Business and Live Here. With Open Arms, Seoul Welcomes You.” So the city did welcome us with open arms, offering us a superb educational program and astonishingly generous hospitality, both old-school and occasionally Gangnam-style. Although the students didn’t all share my zeal for Korean food and kimchi at breakfast, lunch, and dinner, they certainly did take full advantage of the learning (and, on our day off, shopping) opportunities presented by the trip.

—by Jonathan Justice

photos by Jonathan Justice

www.dapanet.org/reader
Helping School Leaders with Legal Issues in Education

The University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration (IPA) and the Delaware Academy for School Leadership (DASL) held the first of two Superintendent and Executive School Leaders Seminars on November 13 in Dover. The seminar was part of a series designed specifically to address issues that pertain to superintendents and their school district executive-leadership teams and inform them on the latest issues, trends, and programs in unique topic areas of interest. This is the second year of the seminars.

The November seminar, “School District Legal Issues: What You Need to Know,” focused on five key issues—the Freedom of Information Act for school districts, employee termination and discipline in education, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and procedural due process and disciplinary issues for exceptional children. Speakers were practicing labor and education attorneys as well as content-area specialists. After the presentations, participants had time to discuss current district policies and ask clarifying questions.

Seminar organizers included DASL staff associate Steven Godowsky, IPA associate policy scientists James Flynn and Kelly Sherretz, IPA director Jerome Lewis, DASL director Jacquelyn Wilson, IPA research assistant Nathan Roby and educational leadership consultant Dennis Loftus.

“We are all out there doing the best we can for every student, every day, and when we get the opportunity to talk about the possibilities and practices in our own districts with each other, we realize how much we can all benefit from working together,” said Racca at a prior seminar. “Those experiences reaffirm that commitment we all make to public education.”

The seminars are intended for superintendents, assistant superintendents, budget directors, human resource/personnel directors, special-education supervisors, principals, facility managers, and school board members.

The second seminar will be held in late March. Building off the current seminars, a new seminar series will begin in January for Charter School executive leaders.

—by Kelley Sherretz
The New Generation of Public Administrators

The University of Delaware’s School of Public Policy and Administration (SPPA), which recently marked its 50th anniversary, has a long-standing tradition of excellence and dedication to service. In keeping with this legacy, SPPA’s students are expected to meet high academic standards and participate in professional experience in the public service field. This year’s entering class of graduate students is not new to the idea of excellence. The cohort comes from various undergraduate programs—ranging from Beijing University of Technology in China, to McMaster University in Canada, to the American Military University, and from the University of Delaware—occupations, and experiences.

SPPA’s master- and doctorate-level programs include the Master of Public Administration (MPA), Master of Arts in Urban Affairs and Public Policy (MA), Master of Arts in Historic Preservation (MAHP), Master of Science in Disaster Science and Management (MS), PhD in Disaster Science and Management, and PhD in Urban Affairs and Public Policy. Each of the programs varies in its required courses and opportunities. The MPA curriculum requires a total of 42-45 credits with coursework related to Public Administration. Within the MPA degree program, students may choose from specializations in Nonprofit Management, Public Management, or Policy and Program Development or design their own specializations.

Among the six degrees, the School boasts 64 first-year students, each with unique backgrounds and areas of interest. Jonathan Bruce and Yin Zhongyu are two students pursuing their MPA degrees. Jonathan, who graduated from Villanova University in 2011 with a degree in communications, has chosen the public-management track. While attending Villanova, he actively participated as a cheerleading captain and as a member of the Sigma Chi fraternity. Jonathan is still deciding his specific interests, which is not uncommon among first-year students, who find there are so many facets of public administration to explore. Yin, who is an international student, graduated from Beijing University of Technology in China with a degree in social work. She has chosen to specialize in Nonprofit Management because of her experience volunteering with such organizations.

The Master of Arts in Urban Affairs and Public Policy comprises six areas of focus, including Media and Public Policy, Housing and Community Development, Urban and Regional Planning, Health Policy, Historic Preservation, and Nonprofits and Philanthropy. First-year MA students follow a curriculum involving an overview of the field, research skills, and theory, for a total of 36 credits. Caitlin Del Collo, who graduated from the University of Delaware with a double major in women’s studies and psychology, is a first-year MA student with an area of interest in women’s status within society. Caitlin’s interest stems from her internship at a local domestic-violence shelter. William Depoo, also a first-year MA student, is focusing on nonprofits and...
philanthropy. As an undergraduate at the University of Delaware, William worked with a human-trafficking NGO in Washington, D.C., and hopes to pursue a career in human rights after receiving his master’s degree.

SPPA also offers the Master of Arts in Historic Preservation. The 39-credit program covers the theory, methods, and practice of historic preservation. Virginia Davidowski, who graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 2006 with a degree in landscape architecture, is pursuing her MA in Historic Preservation with a focus on advanced architectural interpretation and documentation. Virginia’s experience in this field comes from studying architecture and planning of European cities such as Rome. Virginia hopes to graduate with a deepened understanding of historic designed landscapes.

SPPA offers the Master of Science in Disaster Science and Management as well. The 30-credit hour program is interdisciplinary and includes politics of disaster, international aspects of disasters, research methods and analysis, and management decision-making. Students also can choose between two options—a non-thesis MS and an MS with thesis. The non-thesis MS is considered to be a terminal degree. Brian Gildemeyer, who graduated from State University of New York College at Brockport with majors in meteorology and water resources/hydrology, has chosen to pursue an MS in Disaster Science and Management with a special interest in climate change and weather. Upon completion of his master’s degree, Brian hopes to work for a governmental agency like FEMA, NWS, or the EPA to predict how weather events change with the changing climate.

In addition to the four master’s degrees, SPPA also offers two doctoral-level degrees, including a PhD in Disaster Science and Management and a PhD in Urban Affairs and Public Policy.

Ryan Burke, who graduated from Penn State with a bachelor’s degree in crime, law, and justice and his master’s degree in homeland security from St. Joseph’s University, is a first-year PhD student in Disaster Science and Management. As a former U.S. Marine Corps Captain, Ryan is one of several SPPA students with military backgrounds. As a doctoral student, Ryan will be completing 42 credits, including courses from his chosen thematic area, research methods, and dissertation.

Students pursuing the PhD in Urban Affairs and Public Policy have three established areas of specialization from which to choose: governance planning and management, social and urban policy, and technology, environment, and society. Two first-year PhD in Urban Affairs and Public Policy students include Kathryn Gifford and Gaelan Sabatini. Kathryn graduated from the University of Delaware with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering and a master’s degree in food and resource economics. Her interests in the PhD program are focused on program evaluation and cost-benefit analysis of health care. Gaelan is a student who graduated from West Chester University with a bachelor’s degree in public policy and an MPA. He is focusing his doctoral studies on accountability, government ethics, and leadership and public service. Also former military, Gaelan served with an infantry unit in Iraq where he conducted combat operations. Gaelan has helped to support veterans’ needs on campus while pursuing his education.

Over the course of the next few years, SPPA’s graduate students will be enriched with coursework, field work, and experiences that they will carry with them throughout their lives and careers. With the professional experience they acquire through their research assistantships and internships, they will graduate from the University of Delaware with a deep understanding of public service and will be highly valued as the next generation of stewards of public service.

—by DAPA member Alexandra Leach

photo by Mark Deshon
Member Spotlight: Lorraine Sitler

One of the reasons DAPA President Jonathan Justice never got around to his food at the DAPA Annual Awards dinner was that he was talking to Lori Sitler. He wanted to interview her for this article and quickly discovered how many really interesting things she does now and has done in the past. Plus they both grew up in Philly and, as it turns out, lived two blocks from one another—yet more proof of what a “Small Wonder” Delaware really is. In fact, Justice so enjoyed their conversation that he forgot to take notes, so most of the detailed factual information and some of the language here are directly from her official bio.

Sitler is now at Wilmington University, where she is an Assistant Professor in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Chair of the Government and Public Policy program, and Coordinator of Child Advocacy Studies—a certificate program that she helped create at the university based on the model of the National Child Protection Training Center. She lives with her husband and two sons in Old New Castle but originally hails from Northeast Philadelphia. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice and Women’s Studies from LaSalle University, and two master’s degrees from Bryn Mawr College—an MSW and a Master of Law and Social Policy.

Beside her academic qualifications, Sitler has the practical experience to teach public policy, government, and child advocacy. She came to Delaware right after college to be the executive director of what is now the Delaware Center for Justice. And, of course, she joined DAPA then. After assignments that included working in court with the families of murder victims, Sitler went to the first of her two stints with the Delaware Attorney General’s office. As Director of Victims Services, she wrote legislation and developed policies, among other work, for six and a half years. She then worked as Director of Family Support and Parent Education Services for CHILD, Inc., a Delaware nonprofit agency, where, among others things, she was involved in setting up and running what amounted to a kind of suburban settlement house for families living in an environment that in many ways is more difficult for low-income families than living in the inner city.

In her last full-time practitioner position before making the move to Wilmington University in 2005, Sitler returned to the AG’s office as Public Information Officer for the Delaware Department of Justice, in which capacity she was the spokesperson for Attorneys General M. Jane Brady and Carl C. Danberg, as well as the staff of the Attorney General’s Office.

During her career in public service, Sitler has also chaired the Delaware Victims’ Rights Task Force, helping to author Delaware’s Victims’ Bill of Rights, the Attorney General’s Abuse Intervention Committee, and the Delaware Criminal Justice Council’s Sexual Assault Protocol Committee, which developed Delaware’s rape evidence-collection kit.

Sitler is also heavily involved in public and professional service on a volunteer basis. She is a member of the board of directors of the Children’s Advocacy Center of Delaware and a member of the Communications and Development Committee of the Delaware Coalition against Domestic Violence. She is a member of the National Association of Social Workers, the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences and, of course, DAPA.

Obviously, besides being really a lot of fun to talk to, Sitler is a real doer and a serious public servant. We’re delighted beyond measure that she is once again becoming active in DAPA.
Student Spotlight: Dionna Sargent

Dionna Sargent is a second-year graduate student who is pursuing a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree with a focus on housing policy and affordable housing. She earned her Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Temple University in 2004 with a concentration in Real Estate and Finance. At Temple she served as the secretary and treasurer for the real estate professional organization Lambda Alpha International. After graduation, she spent one year managing a multifamily housing community. The following six years were spent in the commercial mortgage–servicing industry, assessing the physical and financial risk of property collateral, performing quality-control tasks, implementing process improvements, developing policies and procedures, and managing projects.

Dionna is a Graduate Research Assistant at the University of Delaware’s Center for Community Research and Service, where she has assisted with developing a methodology for measuring the social impacts of the Brownfield Development Program (BDP) for the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environment Control (DNREC). She is currently working for New Castle County’s (NCCo) Community Development and Housing division on special projects, which include developing initiatives that ensure fair housing for the NCCo jurisdiction, formulating ways to facilitate affordable-housing development, homeownership education and outreach events, crafting of policy amendments, and other grant-administration processes.

Sargent has served as a volunteer for the Big Brother Big Sister program and organizations that serve the homeless and low-income families. Her desire to improve the quality of life for the underserved and disadvantaged drives her commitment to researching and developing solutions for adequate and affordable housing and homelessness issues.

Sargent is a proud member of the American Society for Public Administration and DAPA. DAPA networking events, hosted by the University of Delaware, have provided her with various opportunities to have candid discussions with public-administration professionals about public-policy impacts on nonprofit organizations and state and local government and how to work with these entities to meet the needs of the community. She considers DAPA a tremendous resource for understanding the practical nature of public policy and formulating systematic approaches for resolving issues that plague the local community.