A NEW GENERATION OF PUBLIC POLICY LEADERS

Schools of public policy and administration focus on empowering a diverse student body to make change where it matters most.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: Student-led groups move to the forefront of mental health education
Florida State University a preeminent university in the state of Florida, and one of the most respected research and learning institutions in the country. Offering leading undergraduate, graduate and professional programs that consistently ranks among the nation’s top twenty-five public universities. We offer a student-centered education that inspires the academically motivated, intellectually curious, and socially conscious student.

- Ranked No. 26 among Public Universities by U.S. News & World Report
- Florida State University has been identified as a top performer for black student success, with one of the highest graduation rates among African-American students of nearly 700 universities examined in a 2017 national study by The Education Trust. The report found 74.5 percent of FSU’s African-American students – who make up 8.4 percent of the student body – graduate within six years. Nationally, about 40 percent of full-time, African-American students earn a degree in six years.
- Military Times ranked Florida State No. 22 in the latest “Best Colleges 2018” rankings. Florida State’s online graduate program in criminal justice is ranked No. 4 nationally for educating veterans, according to U.S. News & World Report’s “Best Online Programs for Veterans” rankings (2018).
Public Policy Degrees Can Lead to Lucrative Jobs and Universities Are Starting to Notice
By Alice Pettway

Three Public Policy Grads Make a Difference in Underrepresented Communities
By Ginger O’Donnell

Teachers Pursue Public Policy Degrees to Better Advocate for Their Students
By Ginger O’Donnell

Former Presidents Inspire Public Policy Graduates to Improve Lives
By Dale Singer

Public Policy Professors Work Within the Ranks to Include Race-Conscious Dialogue
By Kelsey Landis
Christia Spears Brown, a psychology professor at the University of Kentucky, has a passion. She believes in the importance of helping everyone in our society understand that we are all connected. That sense of connection is how we ensure a sense of justice for all.

Spreading that message, she believes, starts with our children.

"I'm passionate about ensuring that all children, regardless of the social group they were born into, are treated fairly and equitably. This is a matter of fundamental human rights."

Equality

The Center for Equality and Social Justice (CESJ), housed in the College of Arts and Sciences, is an extension of Spear Brown’s remarkable work. The CESJ is an interdisciplinary research center that promotes equality and social justice through collaborative scholarship and education.

"Our goal is to have a society – whether our focus is international, national, state, community or campus – in which all people are valued and respected as individuals, free from bias and discrimination."

It’s what we believe at the University of Kentucky. It’s who we are.
IN EVERY ISSUE

Brief
6 Diversity and Inclusion News Roundup

New Directions
8 Leaders on the Move

The Diversity Professional Spectrum
13 Leaders of Public Policy Schools

HEED Award Spotlight
18 Universities Welcome Nontraditional Students through Targeted Services
   By Kelsey Landis

Diversity Champion Spotlight
26 Clemson University Goes the Extra Mile for Marginalized Students
   By Mariah Bohanon

Closing INSIGHT
58 Criminal Justice Students Work to “Break the Hate” in the US
   By Mariah Bohanon
Lawsuit Against UNC Broadens the Debate Over Race-Conscious Admissions

A group called the Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) filed a lawsuit in January against the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) claiming the university gives too much weight to race in the admissions process. UNC denies the allegations.

Anti-affirmative action activist Edward Blum is the founder of SFFA, which includes applicants rejected from various universities. The plaintiffs claim considering race disproportionately benefits Hispanic and African American applicants, excluding qualified white and Asian American students.

UNC filed its own court brief stating that race is considered among many factors in a broader context of how a prospective student could contribute to the university. Former Chancellor Carol Folt has depicted the suit as being part of a larger effort to eliminate race-conscious admissions policies at all colleges and universities.

Both sides have asked a federal judge to rule on the matter instead of allowing the case to go to trial.

The suit is similar to another one SFFA filed against Harvard University, which culminated in a three-week trial last fall. Both cases feature statistical analyses as key pieces of evidence, in which economists present opposing data about the extent to which race makes a difference in admissions decisions at the schools.

According to The New York Times, lawyers don’t expect federal Judge Allison Burroughs to issue a ruling in the Harvard case until June.

Unlike the Harvard case, which focused on admissions policies affecting Asian Americans, the lawsuit against UNC more closely resembles historic anti-affirmative action litigation, accusing the university of favoring students of color over white students.

Lawyers told The New York Times that they’re not sure which case will reach the Supreme Court first, but they predict the high court will end up weighing them together as part of a broader decision on race-conscious admissions practices.

These developments come as UNC reels from the latest confederate statue controversy and Folt’s recent resignation. Student protesters toppled the statue known as “Silent Sam” in August, prompting the UNC Board of Trustees to propose the construction of a $5.3 million building to house it.

— Ginger O’Donnell

‘Degrees When Due’ Helps Students with Partial College Credit Cross the Finish Line

Approximately 35 million Americans have attended college without earning a degree, according to the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP). Of that group, 4 million have completed at least two years of college education.

When students invest in higher education without completing their degree, it not only limits their future professional opportunities, but it also poses problems for the United States economy, as 65 percent of all jobs will require a degree or a credential by 2020, IHEP reports.

To address these issues, IHEP launched an initiative called Degrees When Due, partnering with numerous college campuses and state agencies across the U.S. to increase degree attainment for students who have earned only some college credit. Researchers call this process “degree reclamation.”

Degrees When Due originated in a program called Project Win-Win. Founded in 2009, the program was a collaboration between 61 colleges in nine states with the mission of locating and retroactively awarding degrees to students who were no longer enrolled in college but whose records rendered them eligible for an associate’s degree.

As a result of the two programs, more than 500 colleges have awarded 20,000 associate’s degrees in the past decade.

A team of six IHEP researchers and independent consultants continues the mission through Degrees When Due, providing online and live coaching to staff members at colleges and universities across the U.S. to help them implement degree reclamation strategies. In addition, Degrees When Due assists with researching best practices for re-engaging students and disseminating information to higher education institutions.

To partner with Degrees When Due or for more information about the degree reclamation process, visit degreeswhendue.com.

— Ginger O’Donnell
Books that Provide a Social Lens for Education Reform

BY ROMANA MRZLIJAK

This is Not a Test: A New Narrative on Race, Class, and Education by José Luis Vilson

Vilson’s book unfolds like a memoir, each chapter detailing his journey from an Afro-Latino student to math teacher to educational leader. The series of autobiographical essays and stories from the classroom examines how a flawed system of obsessive standardized testing, inequality, and the power of politics failed an increasingly diverse classroom population. Vilson argues for inclusive educational policy that values the voices of students, educators, and parents of color. This is Not a Test is an accessible page-turner for any parent or educator passionate about shaking up the status quo in educational policy.

The New Education: How to Revolutionize the University to Prepare Students for a World in Flux by Cathy N. Davidson

Davidson’s book is an inspiring manifesto for learning that emphasizes individual skill and creativity in an era of constant change. Davidson introduces readers to innovative students and educators at private schools, community colleges, and Ivy League universities, reimagining classrooms for a fluctuating future. Based on historical and ongoing crises facing teachers and administrators, Davidson argues for more creativity, collaboration, and adaptability rather than expertise in higher education. She emphasizes teaching students “soft skills” such as communication that allow them to thrive in an uncertain educational landscape.

The Testing Charade: Pretending to Make Schools Better by Daniel Koretz

Koretz takes a stand on one of today’s most problematic educational issues — testing. Koretz, a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, argues that test-based accountability, which uses test scores to hold teachers accountable for students’ success, hinders genuine learning. His powerful proclamation examines the inevitable shortcomings of high-stakes testing, including cheating, falsely inflated test-scores, and corrupt educational policy. Koretz uses real-world examples and decades of research to map a blueprint for disrupting our reliance on test-based accountability and changing the course of the current educational system.
ARIZONA
Lisa Rhine, PhD, as been named president of Yavapai College. She previously served as provost and chief operating officer of the Chesapeake campus at Tidewater Community College in Virginia.

ILLINOIS
Terrell Carter, DMin, was appointed vice president and chief diversity officer for Greenville University. He was most recently the director of contextualized learning and assistant professor of practical theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Shawnee, Kan.

INDIANA
Sean Huddleston, PhD, has been named president of Martin University in Indianapolis. He previously served as vice president and chief diversity officer for Wells College. He was most recently the director of equity and inclusion at the University of Indianapolis.

Mohammed Khayum, PhD, has been appointed provost of the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville. He previously served as interim provost.

Retired U.S. Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers has been appointed president of Kansas State University in Manhattan. He was most recently interim president for the university and is a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

MARYLAND
Melanie Perreault, PhD, has been named executive vice president of academic affairs and provost at Towson University. She previously served as provost and vice president of academic affairs at Buffalo State College in New York.

Andrew Wu, EdD, has been appointed associate dean of students and director of athletics at Goucher College in Baltimore. He was most recently the college’s interim director of athletics and associate dean of students for student development.

MICHIGAN
Satish Upda, PhD, has been named interim president of Michigan State University in East Lansing. He previously served as the university’s executive vice president for administrative services.

NEW YORK
Sarah Mangelsdorf, PhD, has been appointed president of the University of Rochester. She was most recently provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

NORTH CAROLINA
Karrie Gibson Dixon, EdD, has been named chancellor of Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina. She previously served as the university’s interim chancellor.

Amanda K. Lee, PhD, has been appointed president of Bladen Community College in Dublin. She was most recently chief of staff and vice president of academic affairs at Union College in Kentucky.

OHIO
Ivonne García, PhD, has been named the first chief diversity, equity, and inclusion officer at College of Wooster. She currently serves as Kenyon College’s William P. Rice Associate Professor of English and Literature and as director of the Latinx Studies Concentration.

PENNSYLVANIA
Terrence Mitchell, PhD, was named chief diversity and inclusion officer at Edinboro University in Erie. He previously served as chief diversity officer at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Oneonta.

Wendy Raymond, PhD, has been appointed president of Haverford College. She was most recently vice president for academic affairs and dean of faculty at Davidson College in North Carolina.

SOUTH CAROLINA
Andrew T. Hsu, PhD, has been named president of the College of Charleston. He previously served as provost and executive vice president for academic affairs at the University of Toledo in Ohio.

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Modernizing Our Approach to Talent as the First Wave of Generation Z Enters the Workforce

By Anise Wiley-Little

The youth of Generation Z (born in the mid-1990s through the mid-2000s) are highly diverse. They have been shaped by technology and influenced by the changing world around them, including toxic politics and volatile world economics. Despite these influences, they are more connected to and tolerant of other cultures, races, and multiple sexual orientations.

As the civil rights movement has come and gone and equality remains elusive, these young workers will not have gained firsthand knowledge of the history of this era, including anti-miscegenation laws and the pushback on sexism and misogyny. However, they will have experience with movements like #MeToo, the #MuteRK against musician R. Kelly, and Black Lives Matter. Their access to tremendous amounts of information allows them to ask more of leaders and hold them accountable for organizational decisions, pushing leaders to address social issues that now often bleed into the office environment.
At the beginning of 2019, the United States unemployment rate was at an all-time low, according to the Wall Street Journal. In addition, the Society for Human Resource Management says employers are facing the largest talent shortages since 2007. With the need to bring in talent, regardless of generation, are organizations prepared for the new workforce and their requirements?

Many organizations have not created the flexible talent strategies needed to meet the needs of employees from Generation Z, baby boomers, and the generations in between. Our talent strategies must evolve to allow employees to achieve maximum productivity for our businesses. Some employees need remote work opportunities, while others need a physical desk and daily interaction in an office. Strategies for developing our employees also must evolve to accommodate different generations.

When considering generational differences, it is important to note the overlap in their definitions due to the lack of consensus regarding when each begins and ends. The Pew Research Center and others have standardized the definitions, but they continue to evolve, and people on the cusp between two generations may identify more with one or the other. I use the following guideline, a combination of information from the Pew Research Center and other sources:

- Born between 1928 and 1945: The Silent Generation
- Born between 1946 and 1955: Leading Edge Baby Boomers
- Born between 1956 and 1964: Late Baby Boomers (Generation Jones)
- Born between 1960 and 1979: Generation X
- Born between 1980 and 1994: Generation Y or Millennial
- Born between 1995 and 2010: Generation Z or iGen or Post-Millennial

Because their life influences will look different, the evolution of Generation Z will continue as more members enter the workplace.

**Changes in Transitioning**

One example of a notable change, if it continues, is the “gap year” between high school and college. Previously reserved for the wealthy, it now is emerging for the deserving supported through scholarships and financial aid. According to 20 Colleges that Encourage a Gap Year by Julian Goetz, we find more young people from Generation Z taking a year off to volunteer or pursue new experiences. Students see different universities encouraging this practice, with some offering scholarships. According to the GAP Year Association, those who do so often have higher GPAs and move through their programs faster, finishing school sooner than those starting college right out of high school. We should be evaluating...
now how these new experiences will affect Generation Z’s thinking and their influence on our organizations.

Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Future of Talent

As our digital economy continues to grow, artificial intelligence will begin to replace simple tasks at work and thus the expectations for entry-level employees will change.

With more personalized artificial intelligence driving automated decision-making, employees will expect to come into an organization being more competent than their fellow employees from other generations. Universities will be challenged to prepare this generation to enter the workforce with a higher level of expectation. Corporate Voices for Working Families produced data in 2006 on workforce readiness in the report Most Young People Entering the U.S. Workforce Lack Critical Skills Essential for Success, finding that most workers leaving college were ill-prepared for the workplace. PricewaterhouseCoopers’ 2018 report, Workforce of the Future, The Competing Forces Shaping 2030, indicates there are even more profound changes beyond soft skills facing new entrants to the workforce.

Modernizing Talent Development

Members of Generation Z value interacting with leaders and other employees across the organization in a way that influences decision-making. Human resources professionals building these interactions into talent development plans becomes vital to employee retention.

A senior vice president of human resources at a large international company shared a program with me that selects global cross-functional teams from all over the world to solve current business issues. These teams include all generations but are particularly focused on the inclusion of millennials and Generation Z. The company believes that such practices are preparing them for a future workforce that will require employee involvement in driving the agenda at an earlier stage in their careers.

Previously, leadership would not have thought that these employees would have enough experience to be selected for a team with such influence. The team spends three months together working on a real-life business issue, presenting to senior leaders and others, allowing the exposure and impact on the company that Generation Z yearns for at an early point in their careers.

More organizations will be compelled to create opportunities to accelerate the success of all talent, requiring an integrated talent management strategy that takes into account the differences across and within generations.

Anise D. Wiley-Little is a member of INSIGHT Into Diversity’s Editorial Board. She is a speaker, author, and former executive at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management and Allstate Insurance Company.

Our April 2019 Issue: Schools of Journalism and Communications

Our April issue will feature topics focused on Schools of Journalism and Communications.

The advertising deadline is March 8. To reserve space, call 314-200-9955 or email ads@insightintodiversity.com.
LEADERS OF PUBLIC POLICY SCHOOLS

In each issue, INSIGHT Into Diversity features diverse professionals in higher education.

Karen Markel, PhD, is dean of the College of Business and Public Policy at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She is an accomplished educator with more than 15 years of experience teaching human resource management courses, most recently serving as a professor at Oakland University in Rochester, Mich. The author of more than 20 publications and a frequent presenter at regional, national, and international conferences, Markel’s scholarly contributions focus on overcoming discrimination in the workplace. She is senior-certified by the country’s two main professional human resource organizations, the Society for Human Resource Management and HR Certification Institute.

Cecilia Elena Rouse, PhD, is dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. She also serves as the school’s Lawrence and Shirley Katzman and Lewis and Anna Ernst Professor in the Economics of Education. An experienced researcher of labor economics and the economics of education, Rouse is the senior editor of a biannual academic journal published by the Woodrow Wilson School called The Future of Children. Earlier in her career, she served on the National Economic Council at the White House. From 2009 to 2011, Kelley was a member of the President’s Council of Economic Advisers.

Judith Kelley, PhD, is dean of the Duke Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University as well as the school’s Terry Sanford Professor of Public Policy. A political scientist and expert in international relations, she examines how states, international organizations, and national government organizations can promote political reforms. Her newest book, Scorecard Diplomacy: Grading States to Influence their Reputation and Behavior, focuses on the global fight against human trafficking. A first-generation college graduate, Kelley is the recipient of the Sanford School’s Susan E. Tifft Undergraduate Teaching and Mentoring Award and the Brownell-Whetten Award for Diversity and Inclusion.

Gary M. Segura, PhD, is dean of the Luskin School of Public Affairs at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He has authored or co-authored numerous articles and books about issues of political representation, the domestic politics of wartime public opinion, and the politics of the United States’ growing Latino population. Over the past 18 years, he has directed polling research that has collected information on matters of political importance through more than 100,000 interviews with Americans from all backgrounds. In addition, Segura served as an expert witness on the nature of political power in all three of the landmark LGBTQ marriage rights cases.

Piyushimita (Vonu) Thakuriah, PhD, is director of development for the College of Business and Economics at Boise State University (BSU). As BSU’s associate director of development prior to this appointment, she was highly successful in securing leadership-level annual gifts. Before joining BSU, Blakely worked as a development professional with the University of Notre Dame, building relationships with alumni, parents, and friends of the university to significantly increase annual donations. She started her career as a real estate broker and spent five years operating an award-winning boutique motel in South Lake Tahoe, Calif.

Thomas Guevara is the director of the Indiana University Bloomington Public Policy Institute, which is part of the university’s School of Public and Environmental Affairs. Prior to this position, he served for six years as deputy assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration, where his efforts helped U.S. workers and businesses become more innovative, increasing their competitiveness in the global marketplace. Guevara is experienced in both the private and public sector. He served as director of the accounting firm Crowe Horwath LLP, now known as Crowe LLP, for six years in Indianapolis and also as the assistant budget director for the Health and Human Services division of the Indiana State Budget Agency.
COLLEGE STUDENTS FORM THEIR OWN ADVOCACY GROUPS TO SHAPE MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION ON CAMPUS

Active Minds’ Send Silence Packing suicide awareness exhibit at Daley Plaza in Chicago

By Ginger O’Donnell
Students attending college right out of high school face the daunting reality of taking on new challenges at an age when mental health issues often present themselves, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Anxiety and depression are the two most common health concerns among this population, while suicide is the second highest cause of death for individuals ages 10 to 34, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) reports.

To address the formidable mental health challenges facing them, students on college campuses across the country are stepping up. Over the past decade, a growing number have formed education and advocacy groups to teach their peers about mental health, destigmatize its struggles, and offer a supportive network.

Use of campus mental health resources has increased at significantly faster rates than that of general enrollment at higher education institutions in the United States, the Center for Collegiate Mental Health reports. “Nationally, campus counseling centers are having trouble keeping up with the demands of help-seeking,” says Alison Malmon, founder and executive director of Active Minds, a mental health awareness and advocacy group. “This is due to a number of factors, which I think include increased help-seeking, increased mental health diagnoses, and better and earlier treatment prior to college.”

Nevertheless, some undergraduates may still be afraid to ask for help or may not know what resources are available. Sara Valente, a senior at Harvard University studying computer science, says she waited an entire year to seek help for her depression and anxiety symptoms. “Having to walk into counseling and mental health services in the campus center can be a daunting thought,” she says. As a high-performing student, she also doubted whether her struggles were serious enough to warrant professional therapy.

Student-led groups help individuals like Valente gain the courage to talk about these issues and seek assistance. Some are affiliated with national umbrella organizations, while others were created on campus. Their primary function is to facilitate talking openly about mental illness in order to reduce stigma, increase help-seeking behaviors, and make available resources known.

To Write Love on Her Arms
To Write Love on Her Arms (TWLOHA) supervises 65 student-led university chapters, known as UChapters, at institutions across the U.S. Founder Jamie Tworkowski was working in the surfing industry when he decided to help his friend Renée, who was battling depression, self-injury, and substance abuse. He wrote a story, titled “To Write Love on Her Arms,” describing his experience of helping Renée enter a treatment center. The piece eventually led to the formation of the nonprofit.

Student diversity is fundamental to the identity of the UChapters, according to Aaron Baccash, the organization’s supporter engagement coordinator. “I think that To Write Love has always been [a place] where people
from underrepresented groups feel a lot of belonging,” he says. He cites the enthusiasm of an international student who learned about TWLOHA through the nonprofit’s outreach at an electronic music festival and decided to host a UChapter on his campus. “To Write Love was such a huge thing for him because in the country that he was from, he had never experienced people talking about these types of things,” Baccash recalls.

UChapter members typically meet twice a month. These meetings include planning future events to spread the message of hope and help on campus, discussing articles, videos, and podcasts related to the needs of the students. Sometimes TWLOHA sends organizational materials for the meetings, and other times they are coordinated by UChapter leaders.

The chapters play an active role in suicide prevention awareness. They are all invited to participate in TWLOHA’s World Suicide Prevention Day campaign in September, Baccash says. In 2018, students were asked to respond to the prompt “tomorrow needs me because” on note cards and then displayed the cards throughout campus. One chapter decided to host a pancake breakfast the following day. “We want students to do things that feel unique and specific to their community but within the To Write Love voice,” Baccash says.

**Harvard University SMHL**

Other student-led organizations were established through specific institutions, such as Harvard University’s Student Mental Health Liaisons (SMHL).

SMHL, founded in 2008, was created out of a partnership between six student members and the university’s Counseling and Mental Health Services. The group — whose programming is supervised by clinicians — now has nearly 30 participants from diverse cultures, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds, and academic disciplines. As a sponsored student organization, its members undergo diversity and inclusion training when they join, says Valente, who currently serves as SMHL’s co-president.

SMHL has transitioned from organizing large-scale events to a “more small-scale workshop-centered model,” Valente says. At orientation workshops for freshmen, members share their own mental health stories, provide a breakdown of campus resources, and encourage first-year students to think about mental health challenges that may arise during their college years. Other groups on campus can also reach out to SMHL and request a workshop. “We give a workshop called ‘Being There’ to groups of upperclassmen teaching them how to support a struggling friend,” Valente says. Members also have a voice in developing official campus mental health policies.

**Active Minds**

Active Minds, a nonprofit that calls itself “the nation’s premier organization supporting mental health awareness and education for students,” oversees more than 450 campus chapters with more than 16,000 student members. Alison Malmon founded the organization in 2003 at age 21 after her brother took his own life.

Zoe Howland is co-president of the Active Minds chapter at Ithaca College (IC), where she studies sociology, Culture and Communication, and Women’s and Gender Studies. She was diagnosed with major depression and generalized anxiety disorder at 15, and then with panic disorder at 19. She joined Active Minds during her first
semester of college after noticing the group at a student organization fair. “I was just looking for a group of people that I could potentially be involved with at that point, and I thought it was interesting that they were talking about mental health. I definitely did not know how influential it would be [for me] during my time at IC,” she says.

Howland and other members of her chapter meet once a week. They listen to presentations related to mental health and organize de-stressing activities. “The last couple of presentations we have had focused on psychosis, borderline personality disorder, and advice regarding how to talk to your professors when struggling with your mental health.”

Research shows student-led mental health groups have a significant impact on creating supportive campus climates. According to the RAND Corporation, becoming involved with a chapter of Active Minds makes students more likely to connect with peers who are struggling with depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, or other mental health issues. This change can occur within the span of a single academic year. Additionally, researchers found campuses with Active Minds chapters generally have a more supportive campus climate surrounding mental health, where students are more likely to seek help when they are in distress.

For the members of these groups, sharing their individual stories and shaping the conversation about mental health on campus is a major part of the healing process. “There’s something really empowering about completely owning your narrative, especially when you’re doing it for a larger purpose — to inspire someone else or to destigmatize an issue on a larger scale,” Valente says.

Those involved in the student-led mental health movement believe that their work has the potential to shape the national conversation surrounding these issues. Valente believes that, too. “College students and young adults in general are the new generation of leaders, policymakers, and voters,” Valente says. “How we shape our smaller scale environments — like college campuses or workplace environments — reflects how we will go out and shape the world.”

“College students and young adults in general are the new generation of leaders, policymakers, and voters. How we shape our smaller scale environments — like college campuses or workplace environments — reflects how we will go out and shape the world.”

Sara Valente

Ginger O’Donnell is a senior staff writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
Nontraditional students don’t fall into one category. They can be parents, veterans, servicemembers, or working professionals. They might commute more than 30 miles to campus or take night classes to accommodate their full-time jobs. Regardless of their differences, Arkansas State University (ASU) and Kansas State University (KSU) have made significant efforts to include these groups and ensure their success through services that specifically target them. The result is a more inclusive environment for nontraditional student populations.

Arkansas State University
A growing veteran enrollment at ASU was the wake-up call campus leaders needed to realize they had to create more services for nontraditional students. That was roughly five years ago, says Maurice Gipson, PhD, vice chancellor for Diversity and Community Engagement.

“[Nontraditional students] were not really attending our traditional student programming,” Gipson says. “The university realized there has to be actual services for this population.”

The university began offering services to veterans who needed assistance adjusting to campus culture. Orientations helped provide an entrance to university life, Gipson says, but that was just the beginning of providing support specifically for nontraditional students. Campus leaders wanted to recreate the welcoming environment for others in this community, so they conducted a survey asking what specifically they would like to see. “The results seemed obvious once we got them, but they were not obvious to us [before the survey],” Gipson says.

Family-centric events after regular business hours for nontraditional students helped create opportunities for them to connect with one another and become part of a larger university community, but it was a lounge created specifically for this group that made the biggest difference. “Having a place where they could go and relax, study, take a break in their own dedicated area where there were more students like themselves has really been positive,” Gipson says.

The lounge is staffed by an employee who can provide information about resources. A computer station, comfortable chairs for relaxing, and coffee delivered twice a week help make this area a special space where the students can feel at home.

ASU also provides a booklet of information on resources in the community, from babysitting services to family-friendly restaurants to career search assistance — “things that a
Going the extra mile to make sure this population feels recognized and welcome is also critical, Gipson says. That might mean the chancellor personally delivering — in full regalia — diplomas to students who couldn’t attend their graduation ceremonies because of work or life obligations. “You cannot imagine the impact that makes,” Gipson says. “Unfortunately, sometimes just because of life circumstances, nontraditional students do not get to enjoy everything college has to offer.”

The university would like to do more to include these individuals, perhaps by offering a nighttime graduation ceremony in the future, or a special reception at the beginning of the academic year. Evette Allen, director of ASU’s Multicultural Center, and other university leaders are working toward those goals to ensure “none of our Red Wolves get lost,” Gipson says, referring to the institution’s mascot.

“You cannot have a one-size-fits-all approach to the populations you serve,” Gipson says. “We want to make their experience more worthwhile and wholesome. We want every student who leaves here to be part of the pack.”

**Kansas State University**

Serving veteran students is a focus for KSU, which has a campus in Manhattan, Kan., just miles from Fort Riley Military Base. Servicemembers at Fort Riley often stay in the community after leaving the military and attend college at KSU, says Heather Reed, PhD, assistant vice president, associate dean, and director of Student Life, creating “a great collaborative environment” between the school and the base.

The university dedicates a space in its Student Union to the Veteran Center and also operates a student-led Veterans Association that organizes programs for them. The center — overseen by coordinator Ismael Rodriguez and Assistant Dean and Director Justin Frederick — ensures that they have access to knowledgeable staff, resources and information, a military-friendly lounge, and a quiet study space with computers and a printer. KSU plans to make the current part-time Veteran
Center coordinator position full-time in the near future, Reed says. A full-time coordinator could spend more time improving services and planning outreach to veterans.

This summer, KSU plans to open a U.S. Veterans Affairs (VA) satellite healthcare office near the Manhattan campus, according to Reed. Doing so means students will no longer have to drive nearly 100 miles to the VA hospital in Topeka, Reed says.

Other resources for veterans and nontraditional students include scholarships, childcare services, on- and off-campus housing, free tutoring, study skills courses, financial assistance, peer networking, and campus events.

KSU also drills down to the departmental level to ensure services meet the needs of these students, says Bryan Samuel, PhD, the university’s chief diversity and inclusion officer.

Each college within the university from agriculture to engineering has its own “diversity point person,” or DPP. The DPP serves the purpose of supporting the college by making sure students from underserved and underrepresented populations persist and graduate.

The university employs 11 DPPs who plan ways to improve diversity and serve as liaisons between students and faculty, Samuel says. The DPPs report to the dean of their...
assigned college and also collaborate with Samuel on larger projects. “Those individuals come together and understand what’s going on and keep the pulse of the college and the students in those colleges,” Samuel says.

KSU is halfway into a 10-year diversity plan with 10 goals and more than 70 action items. “We are now reviewing it to see what progress we’ve made and the accomplishments and the goals relevant to those key activities and outcomes,” Samuel says. The plan focuses on shaking up the status quo to create a “harmonious environment” by “implementing conferences, summits, workshops, heritage months, and other programs that educate people and build cultural competence.”

Samuel measures success in three ways: quantitative, qualitative, and by reputation. “Everybody likes quantitative data where they can see two plus two equals four,” Samuel says. When students are happy with the choice they made in attending K-State, Samuel adds, “when they are a member of the community and happy to be there, I think that tells you a lot about being successful.” Samuel says he also measures success by reputation.

He likens the three measures to a “three-legged stool.” “The organization is the seat, [the three legs are] the people there, the place, and then you’ve got the brand,” Samuel says. “If any of those things come off, your school won’t work very well.”

Kelsey Landis is the Editor-in-Chief of INSIGHT Into Diversity. Arkansas State University is a 2018 HEED Award recipient. Kansas State University is a 2015-2018 HEED Award recipient.
Recruiters Tackle the Downturn in International Student Enrollment

By Sheryl S. Jackson

The number of international students entering United States colleges and universities fell 6.6 percent in the 2017-2018 academic year compared with the previous year’s numbers, according to a survey by the Institute of International Education. This decline continues a trend that began four years ago.

Although international students contributed more than $39 billion to the U.S. economy through tuition and living expenses in the 2017-2018 academic year, according to the Association of International Educators, “the real value of students from other countries is the diversity of thought, culture, and innovation they bring to campus,” says Martyn J. Miller, PhD, assistant vice president for International Programs in the Office of International Affairs at Temple University.

His university has experienced the same downturn as other schools with total international undergraduate enrollment for the 2018-2019 academic year 5 percent lower than that of the previous year. Miller attributes the drop to a reduction in new freshmen applications and transfer admissions as opposed to students returning to their home country.

While enrollment can vary depending on the economic and social environment in any given country, U.S. institutions find they are having to make it clear to international students that they are welcome, Miller says.

“On our recruiting trips, we remind students and parents that what they hear in the media about safety of international students in the U.S. is exaggerated,” Miller says. “We also emphasize the international organizations and resources we have on campus to ensure their success here.”
Temple has a long-standing tradition of ensuring students from abroad are invited to the homes of faculty, staff, or other students to celebrate Thanksgiving. In 2016, with U.S. immigration issues causing concern, Temple’s Thanksgiving message associated with the holiday event was, “You are welcome here.” It became a hashtag used by an international educational organization that adopted the phrase for a video designed to encourage students to apply to U.S. schools.

Temple now manages the official website and social media platforms for the movement, which includes 350 colleges, 70 international education companies and organizations, and 20 high schools who use it at events and in communications, according to Miller.

Beginning in Fall 2019, 56 participating U.S. colleges and universities will each offer two renewable annual scholarships that cover a minimum of 50 percent tuition to select international undergraduates. “The scholarships were added when participating schools decided that it was important to demonstrate commitment to bridging intercultural divides with more than just a message,” Miller says. Applications and a list of participating colleges and universities can be found at YouAreWelcomeHereUSA.org.

Like Temple University, Iowa State University (ISU) has experienced a decrease in new enrollment of international students. In 2016-2017, there were 334 international first-years, in 2017-2018 the number dropped to 232, and in 2018-2019 there are only 165 enrolled, says Katharine Johnson Suski, director of admissions. Reasons for the decline include difficulty getting visas, fears of racism, financial concerns, and an increasingly conservative political trend in Iowa, she says. The combination of these concerns and the number of universities worldwide ramping up their international recruitment efforts increases the competition for a shrinking number of students who want to come to the U.S., according to Suski.

ISU’s international recruitment program has expanded with more trips to targeted countries and more recruiters. “We have two recruiters who are fluent in Mandarin and Spanish, but we send a team of up to 11 people who represent different academic areas as well as our International and Student Scholars Office,” Suski says. In 2018, the team visited five cities in China. This year they will go back, and will visit four cities in India and one in Korea.

Alumni play an important role in each of the visits, Suski says. They are invited to the luncheons, panel discussions, and informal meetings with parents and potential students to give their firsthand perspective on attending ISU. “Young alumni are very effective at communicating with parents and reassuring them that Iowa is a good place for their children,” she adds.

The university has also changed its new student orientation for international students. Because more parents were attending the session, a parent-focused program now runs concurrently with the student program to address parents’ need for information.

American University (AU) in Washington, D.C., is in a different position than most colleges and universities. The numbers of international students seeking undergraduate or non-degree certifications has steadily increased over the past three years from 1,462 in 2016-2017 to 1,837 this year.

Fanta Aw, PhD, vice president for Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence at AU, points to the school’s support students from other countries.”

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degree programs, Aw says. “Our job placement rate after graduation, which is enhanced by alumni around the world, is another way that we show the value of attending our university.”

There is a difference in encouraging students to apply and converting acceptance into enrollment, Aw says. “We return to regions that have a large number of acceptances to meet with students and parents again as they are making their decisions,” she says. “Alumni attend these events as well to build relationships with the families and answer questions.”

Aw says alumni are critical to recruiters’ understanding of cultural differences that must be addressed in questions about housing, the social environment, classroom structure, and transportation. “We need to talk specifically about what is included in an apartment lease rather than assume they know because leases are different in Zimbabwe or Australia.”

Careful attention to cultural differences in all communications — face-to-face, social media, email, or written correspondence — is an important part of AU’s success, Aw says. “You must review marketing materials carefully and be mindful of cross-cultural differences in what students are looking for in a U.S. education and how they find the information.”

Suski also suggests university recruiters think beyond the most obvious issues for international students such as visas, travel, language, and cultural differences. “One of the concerns we discovered had nothing to do with academics or visas. Instead, they are worried about our weather, especially students who have never seen snow,” she says. “We now know to reassure them that our buildings are heated, and we make sure they have appropriate winter clothing with a shopping trip.”

As school recruiters pay more attention to the message they provide, it is also important to evaluate their methods for communicating, Suski says. “Everyone uses social media and email to share information and although that is an effective way to communicate with potential students, we want to stand out from the crowd,” she says. “We also send a letter, and we’re surprised that when we meet them for the first time, they all remember the letter.” It is this type of extra effort, she says, that is necessary to “capture international students’ attention and attract them to our university.”

Sheryl S. Jackson is a contributing writer to INSIGHT Into Diversity.
Clemson University in South Carolina may be well-known for its championship sports teams, but its success as an academic institution extends far beyond athletics. Clemson’s acceptance rate is 51 percent. Its first-year retention rate, at 93 percent, surpasses the national average by 15 percentage points.

Perhaps most impressive about this university, however, is its commitment to uplifting students and communities sometimes relegated to the sidelines of higher education. Through extensive programming, campus-wide support, and the dedication of Clemson’s faculty and staff, it has become a place of opportunity for marginalized populations and a role model for other institutions.

Highlighted below are just a few of the university’s diversity and inclusion efforts that make it a welcoming place for students looking for a college where they can feel welcome and included.

Hispanic and Latino Outreach
As the Hispanic and Latino populations in the United States continue to grow, equity-minded institutions like Clemson are working to promote cultural inclusion and educational opportunities for these often-marginalized communities. In spring 2017, Clemson hired Julio Hernandez to guide these efforts as the college’s inaugural associate director for Hispanic outreach. His role includes recruiting and supporting Hispanic students in underserved high schools, building community connections, and increasing the number of Hispanic faculty and staff.

Having a staff member dedicated solely to Hispanic outreach has been successful. Over the past two years, the number of Latino students applying to Clemson rose 108 percent while the number of Latinos applying for open jobs at Clemson increased by 50 percent, according to Hernandez.

“The more [Hispanic] professors and employees we have on campus, the more places we have where Hispanic students can make connections with someone who may understand where they’re coming from,” says Hernandez, adding that many of these students are first-generation. “When you’re faced with something you’ve never had to do before, like creating a résumé, it’s encouraging to have someone to turn to...
in the career services office who looks like you or may share your background.”

Clemson is also committed to boosting Hispanic and Latino representation by supporting and recruiting faculty. As of 2016, just 5 percent of college and university faculty in the U.S. were Hispanic or Latino, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

In September 2018, the university hosted its first annual Hispanic/Latinx Voices in Academia Conference, a one-day symposium that highlighted the research and accomplishments of these academics at Clemson and surrounding communities. The event “gave everyone an opportunity to speak,” says Hernandez, explaining that every researcher who participated in the conference was able to give a 10-minute speech on their work. Nearly 100 academics and students attended the conference, according to Hernandez.

The day also included breakout sessions and keynote speakers, culminating with Noche de Gala. Marking the end of the campus’ Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month festivities, the gala featured food, entertainment, and a fundraiser to support students in the national Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

In addition to celebrating scholarly achievements, the event demonstrated Clemson’s commitment to supporting Latino professionals and embracing Hispanic culture, something Hernandez hopes will inspire Latino faculty members and graduate students at other institutions to consider careers at Clemson, he says.

Hernandez also works closely with human resources and hiring committees — as well as the local Latino business community — to encourage the recruitment of Latino and bilingual employees. Bilingualism is a valued skill for building relations between the school and local Latino populations, he explains, adding that the school offers some admissions materials and orientation sessions in Spanish so that parents who are not fluent in English can participate in their child’s enrollment process.

Engaging with the Hispanic and Latino populations at large is a priority for Hernandez, who wants Clemson to be a place where every Hispanic resident of the City of Clemson and the surrounding region can feel at home. So far, the university’s efforts to embrace this community appear to have been successful. In 2018, events like Salsa at Sunset — a festival of Latino dancing, music, and food in the Clemson amphitheater — and a Día de Muertos celebration in the South Carolina Botanical Garden brought hundreds of visitors from throughout the region to campus.

More than 500 people from Clemson and the surrounding area took part in the celebration, more than any other event in the Botanical Garden’s 25-year history, according to Hernandez.

“It means a lot that people at Clemson and the surrounding cities are supporting us in helping the Hispanic community to see themselves represented here and to trust us as a community,” he says. “As a result, we can see that more Hispanic students are drawn to our campus. The number applying for next fall already matches that of 2018, which was a record-breaking year.”

“The numbers show that we’re on the right track,” Hernandez says, “but we still have a lot of work to do.”

**Men of Color Summit**

One of Hernandez’s biggest goals is to increase enrollment and success for Hispanic male students. As co-chair of Clemson’s annual Men of Color Summit, he helps organize and lead a conference of more than 2,000 attendees including educators, business leaders, and high school and college students from across the country. They are all dedicated to promoting bright futures for young African American and Hispanic men, who have the lowest high school and college graduation rates of any other demographic but “can relate to one another through shared experiences,” Hernandez says.

“In order to do that,” Hernandez adds, “they need champions and people to advocate for them, which is why we invite educators, community leaders, parents, and more. It’s an all-hands-on-deck approach.”

Lee A. Gill, JD, chief diversity officer for the university, proposed the idea of hosting the summit when
he started at Clemson in 2016. Having organized a similar event in his previous position with the University of Akron in Ohio, Gill says Clemson’s leadership readily supported his vision. The dedication of people like Hernandez and Clemson President Jim Clemens, both first-generation college graduates, helped garner support from the campus, community, and summit sponsors.

The summit consists of several keynote speakers, two days of presentations, and more than 40 breakout sessions. Topics range from cultivating good study habits to addressing identity crises common among young marginalized men, according to Gill.

The third annual Men of Color Summit will take place in April 2019. Specific themes include career and professional development; entrepreneurship; masculinity and personal identity; retention, graduation, and student achievement; and social and community engagement.

**Tiger Alliance**

Clemson brings 400 male high school students of color from neighboring South Carolina counties to attend the Men of Color Summit. These young men are participants in a four-year college access program known as Tiger Alliance, which is designed to cultivate a college mindset and culture among the students and their broader communities.

Tiger Alliance mainly targets students who “are not putting forth the maximum effort in their education because they don’t think college is for them,” says Matthew Kirk, associate director. Of the 400 members, 98 percent are first-generation, he adds.

Alliance students regularly visit schools where they can see men like themselves thriving in a college environment. The program also employs male Clemson students known as Tiger Alliance Ambassadors who serve as role models and mentors. Ambassadors accompany Kirk on his monthly visits to the nine high schools that participate in the program, where they share their personal stories of overcoming obstacles to achieve college success and lead small group discussions on college readiness.

Ambassadors also help lead the Tiger Alliance Summer Academy, a three-day event where members stay on Clemson’s campus, learn about the college experience, and participate in identity-affirming experiences. “A lot of my professional background is in identity development,” Kirk says. “For young men, particularly young men of color, there are a lot of messages in the media, from older men, and from peers that having a masculine identity means being oppressive.”

The Alliance is already showing positive results in the two years since it was founded. In 2018, all
Tiger Alliance seniors completed high school and approximately 92 percent enrolled in either college or the military post-graduation.

The greatest signs of success, however, are the attitudes and confidence of these students, Kirk says. “They talk about how they never thought college was for them before going with us on college visits, going to the Men of Color Summit, and all the other cool things we do together.”

**LGBTQ Programs**

As with many of Clemson’s diversity and inclusion focus areas, efforts to support and celebrate its LGBTQ population are robust. Located in the Harvey and

Clemson’s outreach efforts for LGBTQ students and allies include promoting LGBTQ pride and the campus’ Sexuality and Gender Alliance (SAGA).

Lucinda Gantt Multicultural Center, the university’s LGBTQ Programs division offers advocacy and educational opportunities, social programs and services, and a full calendar of campus events.

The decision to house its LGBTQ office in the campus’ Multicultural Center — rather than in a separate center — was inspired by the university’s intersectional approach to diversity and identity. “We know that our students don’t just bring one identity to the table,” says Kendra Stewart-Tillman, PhD, director of the center. “If you’re an LGBTQ student of color, you shouldn’t have to choose whether to find support at a multicultural center or at a LGBTQ center. Here, we serve all students and all identities.”

Among the many events celebrated on campus are National Coming Out Week, Pride Week, and Trans Awareness Week. While these occasions offer fun and community-building activities — such as a National Coming Out Day Festival — they are also seen as opportunities for building awareness and empathy around LGBTQ issues. During Trans Awareness Week in November, for example, Clemson hosted a vigil to acknowledge “the violence against trans people, especially trans women of color, and the number of murders [of transgender people] that happen each year,” says Stewart-Tillman. The week also included educational opportunities, such as guest speakers and discussions on topics like gender as a social construct and exploring sex and gender outside the traditional binary, she says.

This empathetic approach extends to university events held specifically for LGBTQ students and employees. Every year before Thanksgiving break, the center hosts Rainbow Feast — a meal that celebrates the LGBTQ community while recognizing that the holiday season can be difficult for those whose families are unaccepting of their sexual orientation or gender identity. “We consider the feast a family event that builds community among this population,” Stewart-Tillman says. “But it’s also about acknowledging the nuances of the LGBTQ experience and understanding that this might not be the easiest time for some members of this community.”

Clemson faculty and staff members regularly open their homes to LGBTQ students who cannot stay with family during Thanksgiving and winter breaks, she adds.

The university trains students and employees to advocate for and support the LGBTQ population on campus. While Clemson has offered safe zone ally training for more than 15 years, the recent hiring of a full-time employee to oversee LGBTQ programs has enabled the center to host multiple training sessions for any student, faculty, or staff member who wishes to become an LGBTQ ally.

When it comes to society’s most marginalized populations, the university goes the extra mile in promoting cultural inclusion, personal encouragement and affirmation, and safe spaces. For those students who are often overlooked in higher education, Clemson provides a welcoming campus community to call home.

Mariah Bohanon is the associate editor for *INSIGHT Into Diversity*. Clemson University is a 2018 Diversity Champion and 2017-2018 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award winner. *INSIGHT Into Diversity* is a sponsor of the 2019 Men of Color National Summit.
FEATURE: ONLINE EDUCATION
In the 2018-2019 academic year, the average cost of tuition and fees for an undergraduate student at a private, nonprofit university in the United States is $35,676, according to U.S. News & World Report. Even at a four-year public institution, students are paying, on average, $9,716. The total in-state program cost for public online colleges averages $37,200, excluding fees.

These are price tags many students can't afford, says Shai Reshef, president of University of the People (UoPeople), a low-cost online university that charges no tuition and minimal fees in an effort to open higher education to all qualified applicants, regardless of their financial situation.

Prior to founding UoPeople, Reshef was the chair of KIT eLearning, the online learning partner of the University of Liverpool. “It was a revelation to see how powerful online learning can be,” says Reshef, “but I also realized that, for most people, it was nothing but wishful thinking. It was too expensive.” It occurred to him that many of the things that make traditional universities so expensive could actually be had for free via open-source technology, the sharing of teaching resources, and volunteers. Someone just needed to put all the pieces together, which is exactly what Reshef did.

This academic school year is UoPeople’s 10th, and over 17,000 students from more than 200 countries and territories are currently enrolled. The university offers associate and bachelor’s degree programs in business administration, computer science, and health science as well as MBA and an MEd program.

The project hasn’t always been an easy sell, though, in a world where many are still wary of online education. “There are a lot of people who have this preconception or prejudice about education online,” says Reshef. “It’s new, and it’s not what they’re used to, and they are afraid of it. But that doesn’t mean that it’s not good.”

Reshef stands firm in his belief that UoPeople offers classes that match brick-and-mortar universities’ quality of education. As evidence, he cites agreements with the University of California, Berkeley; New York University Abu Dhabi; and the University of Edinburgh that allow UoPeople associate degree graduates who qualify for admission to pursue bachelor’s degrees at these partner institutions. Reshef also notes that in 2014, the university received accreditation from the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC), a national agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

Some organizations warn, however, that national accreditation comes with its drawbacks. According to GetEducated.com, a consumer group that ranks online colleges and works to protect students from online education fraud, there are important differences between national and regional accreditation. More than 85 percent of U.S. colleges hold regional certification — the “gold standard,” according to the organization’s website. And regionally accredited colleges and universities do not widely accept transfer credits awarded by nationally certified online programs — a problem for students wishing to use their UoPeople credits to move on to other institutions. Employers and certification agencies may also refuse to accept credits and degrees from universities that are not regionally certified.

Kristine Azagra, a current business administration student at UoPeople who lives in the Philippines, recognizes that choosing an online degree over a brick-and-mortar university may have its downsides. “There are some parts of the world which view online university as somehow less valuable compared to the traditional university,” she says. Nevertheless, after graduating with an associate degree from UoPeople
in February, Azagra elected not to try to transfer to a traditional institution. “I am familiar with the UoPeople system and its quality,” she says. Azagra is also a scholarship recipient, which she says played a part in her decision, as she may not be able to receive similar financial aid at another institution.

The estimated costs of a UoPeople degree — $2,060 for an associate, $4,060 for a bachelor’s, $2,460 for an MBA, and $2,660 for an MEd — are drastically lower than tuition and fees at many other institutions. Additionally, 17 percent of UoPeople students currently have scholarships, says Reshef. The university earmarks financial support for certain groups of students and awards scholarships on a first-come, first-served basis. Reshef hopes that UoPeople can eventually double that number to 34 percent. “Our mission is that no student will be left behind due to financial reasons,” he says, “so if they can’t pay the fees, we give as many scholarships as we have.”

UoPeople’s low cost and scholarships have attracted students who might not have an opportunity to attend college otherwise: refugees and asylum seekers, undocumented immigrants, first-generation and low-income college students, people carrying debt from previous universities, those who are working, and student-parents. “UoPeople is for those who are qualified for higher education but [for whom] the doors are shut,” says Reshef. “We use the internet to bring quality higher education to everyone who deserves it but cannot attain it otherwise.”

In order to do so, UoPeople has had to maintain a lean budget and efficient operations. Technology has been the key, says Reshef. Instead of an admissions staff of tens or hundreds, UoPeople has four. Professors are volunteers overseen by a paid academic coordinator, and some day-to-day assignments are peer-reviewed. And of course, the university doesn’t provide housing, a health clinic, or other similar services that brick-and-mortar universities furnish, enabling it to reduce overhead.

The result is an ultra-efficient, ultra-diverse online educational environment that Saif Jalil, an MBA student who lives in Saudi Arabia, describes as being a great experience. “Students are from different cultures and backgrounds,” he says. “And my professors are attentive and respond well to questions.”

Azagra agrees that one of UoPeople’s strengths lies in its diversity. “It is designed to [help you] get a degree regardless of your location, race, or ethnicity,” she says. “It gives underprivileged students an opportunity to get a college education, especially those [who are] victims of war, [who are] discriminated against due to their financial conditions. … In other words, UoPeople gives hope to those who may have lost hope.”

For Reshef, UoPeople isn’t an end, though; he hopes it is the beginning. “University of the People is university by the people and for the people, and that’s creating a movement for tuition-free university,” he says. “I think that more than anything else, we’ve built a model for other universities and for governments to show them that the challenge of higher education can be addressed … not necessarily our exact model, not necessarily by us, but we’ve shown them that there is a way.”

Alice Pettway is a contributing writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
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Clemson University has been ranked by U.S. News & World Report among the top-25 public universities in the nation for 11 straight years. The University has been classified as a Carnegie R1 research university that creates economic opportunities. Faculty, staff and students contribute to Clemson’s national reputation as a great place to study, live and work, and the University invites others to learn more about career opportunities at clemson.edu/careers. To promote inclusive excellence, the University’s Men of Color National Summit works to increase the number of African-American and Hispanic males who finish high school and attend college.

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• The Harvey and Lucinda Gantt Multicultural Center supports and advocates for all Clemson students’ needs while providing diverse and experiential learning opportunities.
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• Tiger Alliance mentors and prepares African-American and Hispanic high school males for college entrance and success.

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clemson.edu/menofcolor
Public policy and administration scholars go on to become the country’s leaders and lawmakers. This issue explores how universities are preparing them to make decisions that will serve citizens from diverse backgrounds. Read about how teachers are taking steps into the realm of policymaking, how undergraduate programs are aiming to include diverse students, and how professors are working to bring race-conscious dialogue to curricula. These movements in the world of higher education will make waves in how future laws will take shape.
Public Policy Degrees Can Lead to Lucrative Jobs and Universities Are Starting to Notice

BY ALICE PETTWAY

“Why not choose a career that is more recognizable and pays really well?” is a question Richard Barke, director of undergraduate studies at Georgia Tech’s School of Public Policy, says his students often hear from family and friends.

It’s a false perception “that public policy bachelor’s degrees don’t lead to desirable, well-paying careers,” Barke says. Approximately 30 percent of graduates from his program go on to law school, and for those who don’t, the largest employment opportunities are in management consulting. A recent article by Gregory Lewis, PhD, in the Journal of Public Affairs Education concludes that graduates who hold a bachelor’s degree in public administration earn more on average than graduates with competing degrees, such as those in communications, psychology, criminal justice, and education.

Public administration majors are also “strikingly diverse,” according to the article by Lewis, who is chair of the public management and policy program at Georgia State University’s Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. He analyzed data from the United States Census Bureau’s American Community Surveys (ACS) for 2009-2014 and concluded that, when compared with other degrees — including business, economics, sociology, and criminal justice — public administration programs have some of the highest percentages of black and Latinx graduates.

The versatility of public policy degrees draws diverse students, says Sandra Rothenberg, PhD, chair of Public Policy in the College of Liberal Arts at the Rochester Institute for Technology. “A bachelor’s of science degree allows students to develop skills in policy analysis, communication, and advocacy that can be applied to the student’s own area of interest,” Rothenberg says. “We have had students concentrate in a range of topics, including public management, economics, health policy, energy and environmental policy, cybersecurity, criminal justice, and law.”

Despite these positive aspects, enrollment in undergraduate public administration programs has until recently remained “low, but stable” at about 0.2 percent of college students born after 1945, according to Lewis. He writes that the data doesn’t point to a “surge in demand,” but does make a case for encouraging undergraduate
programs, arguing “the evidence suggests that the [undergraduate] program helps develop a more diverse public service and if earnings are a reasonable proxy for quality, a more effective one.”

A Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) undergraduate survey found increasing interest in bachelor’s degree programs. Of member schools who responded to the survey, 23 percent were considering creating an undergraduate program, and 64 percent already offered an undergraduate major in public administration, policy, or affairs. NASPAA is a membership organization of graduate education programs in public policy, public administration, and public and nonprofit management.

Barke has seen growing interest in the public policy undergraduate degree at Georgia Tech, as well. His bachelor of science program has doubled in size over the past four years, surpassing the master’s program. He also says there are distinct differences between the career paths of undergraduate and graduate students.

Graduate students, Barke says, are more likely to already have a career in mind, whereas undergraduates are still figuring out their path. “Some want to be policy analysts,” he says. “Some want to work in the NGO (non-governmental organization) sector."

More Insight: NASPAA

NASPAA provides curriculum guidelines for both undergraduate and graduate public policy degree programs. While the organization does outline where the degrees should differ, its accreditation standards for both include the same five universal competencies:

- To lead and manage in public governance
- To participate in and contribute to the policy process
- To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions
- To articulate and apply a public service perspective
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Meet Assistant Professor of Public Administration Danielle N. Johnson, MPA, PhD

In her current research, Dr. Johnson studies efforts to reduce health disparities in the U.S. and evaluates how social factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and neighborhood characteristics influence the ability to address health disparities among medically vulnerable populations. Dr. Johnson is one of many exceptional faculty members who bring their passion for public service to their teaching and research at Villanova.

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Many are keeping law or MBA school as an option, and too few, we think, plan to work in government.”

In his analysis, Lewis found that the top occupations for public policy or administration graduates who stopped at the bachelor’s degree level went into management or administration or became police officers, detectives, or private investigators. Others went on to complete professional or doctoral degrees to become lawyers or physicians.

Regardless of what the most common career goals are, NASPAA recommends that undergraduate programs provide “the flexibility to meet both the needs of students without fixed career objectives and the needs of the person already in the public service who wish to enhance their skills or prepare for different roles” as well as “adequate preparation for entry into graduate study in related fields.”

Georgia Tech prepares its undergraduates by requiring at least one internship for academic credit. Barke says many students complete second or third internships, a degree component that gives them “wide experience and perspectives on careers.” Students are also required to complete a capstone project solving problems provided by businesses, government organizations, and NGOs.

The word is getting out about the value of their undergraduate program, Barke says. In the past five years, some of the top management consulting firms in the U.S. have begun recruiting Georgia Tech public policy bachelor’s degree graduates.

The students Barke sees coming into the undergraduate program are looking for a path that allows them to couple their analytical skills with human-oriented work. “They say they want to make contributions to society,” he says, “but by being evidence-based analysts that can look at problems from a variety of perspectives.” For these students, Barke believes, an undergraduate degree in public policy is an excellent choice.

Alice Pettway is a contributing writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
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JAMES CHAN

When James Chan was 11 years old, his father was killed by a drunk driver. Chan went from living a relatively privileged life in New York City to gaining firsthand experience with the challenges that lower-socioeconomic households face.

Living off of his immigrant Chinese mother’s minimum wage job and his father’s survivor benefits, Chan relied on programs like Medicaid and free and reduced school lunch to get by.

Despite these hardships, he went on to earn his bachelor of arts in business administration and political science from the University of Florida in 2012. The obstacles he faced also influenced his decision to pursue a master’s in public policy (MPP) from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. He earned his MPP in 2014.

Chan, who identifies as Chinese American and LGBTQ, says those with intersectional identities need to work together to coordinate public policy to benefit multiple underrepresented groups simultaneously, not just one at a time. “It can’t just be one or the other, but how do we all work together to advance the common good?” he says.

Chan’s perspective on intersectionality came partially from his experience at a nonprofit organization called the Florida 501c3 Civic Engagement Table. The organization is focused on increasing civic engagement among underrepresented communities, from Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to LGBTQ individuals.

Chan worked with approximately 50 nonprofit partners, all of which specialized in separate advocacy areas, sometimes concentrating specifically on one underrepresented group. “There are so many common issues and values shared between these groups, but there’s a lack of coordination between them. So, my work was to really work with all these partners to try to increase specific engagement capacity of [different] groups,” Chan says.

One of his first forays into public policy was as an intern for the Florida NEXT Foundation, founded by former Chief Financial Officer of Florida Alex Sink. As research director for Florida NEXT, Chan examined what other states had done to motivate startup businesses to come to their states and developed strategies for making Florida a friendly place for young business owners.

Today, Chan serves as Florida state...
director for the State Innovation Exchange, a national organization where he builds partnerships with legislators who are advancing and defending progressive policies.

Chan also focuses on volunteering his time to charity work. He served on the founding board of a nonprofit organization called Enterprising Latinas, which helps women support themselves by starting small businesses. In yet another role, he is the Tampa Bay chapter director of the New Leaders Council, a nonpartisan organization that hosts a free, annual fellowship program in all 50 states with the goal of training the next generation of progressive leaders.

In the same vein, he serves on the Alumni Advisory council of the Public Policy and International Affairs Program. “Being involved in these two groups has really given me hope about what’s possible for our future,” he says. “What I see every year in our alumni, our new fellows, is people who are brilliant in their work and are hungry to change the world,” he adds.

ANGIE JEAN-MARIE

Angie Jean-Marie, a Haitian American woman and first-generation college student who earned her MPP at the University of Southern California (USC) in 2015, describes the trajectory of her career as a process of “leaning into doors that open.”

She decided to pursue a degree in the field after working for three years as a legislative assistant for former U.S. Rep. Donna F. Edwards, an experience that impressed upon her the role of special interest groups in the legislative process. She attended USC’s Price School to “fortify [her] knowledge of policy and analysis.” During her studies, Jean-Marie learned about different avenues policymakers can pursue, such as pushing for social responsibility in corporations and working for local government.

She stayed in Los Angeles after graduating, landing a job at the Goldhirsh Foundation, which invests in solving social issues in the city. Jean-Marie says her proudest accomplishment at the foundation was supervising a program called “LA2050.” She managed three rounds of a challenge that awarded $1 million grants to winners whose projects enhanced the lives of city residents through education, entrepreneurship, sustainable public spaces, and more.

The money helped fund organizations such as the Lost Angels Children’s project, which teaches car restoration as both an after-school program and an opportunity for job skills training. She also helped finance others such as the L.A. Bioscience Hub, a group that works with companies to place community college students in biotech jobs around the city.

After her work at Goldhirsh, she became director of a national campaign called #VoteTogether, an initiative of the nonprofit Civic Nation in Washington, D.C. The initiative aims to increase voter turnout and is based on the findings of leading civic engagement researcher and Columbia University professor, Donald Greene. Green “found that by making voting about celebration and community, we can increase turnout by 4 percentage points,” Jean-Marie says.

Being a part of the initiative during the 2018 midterm elections, when a record number of individuals from historically underrepresented groups were elected to public office, was “really inspiring,” she adds.

Originally an “east-coaster” who grew up in Long Island, N.Y., which she describes as a “majority-minority community,” Jean-Marie appreciates the opportunity to make an impact on the lives of those working and living in the city of Los Angeles.

“L.A. has all the problems that I think the rest of the country is grappling with. Given the scale of the city — the city itself has 4 million people, the county has 10 million, and the metro area has 20 million — it’s a pretty significant scale to think about how to address the issues,” she says.

Another reason she is passionate about social change in Los Angeles, she says, is that the city’s demographics reflect the country’s future. “I hope L.A. can serve as a great test bed for new innovations and problem-solving that can be modeled in other places across the country.”

Angie Jean-Marie conducts campaign business at #VoteTogether’s co-working space, Cross Campus, in Los Angeles.
JULIANA PINO

After studying East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago and working for several years at the U.S.-China Chamber of Commerce, Juliana Pino decided to pursue a path in public policy and environmental justice. She attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where she earned both a Master of Science in Environmental Policy and Planning and Environmental Justice as well as an MPP from the Gerald R. Ford School.

For Pino, her two areas of concentration — East Asian civilizations and environmental justice in public policy — are not unrelated. “In both areas of study, I am trying to understand the relationship between the lives of everyday people and the decisions their government is making about them,” she says.

She serves as policy director at the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO), a community-based organization located in a high-density, low-income, predominantly Mexican neighborhood on the south side of Chicago. Local parents founded LVEJO after some of their children became sick because of a roof refurbishment project that went on while students were at elementary school. The parents were able to shed light on hazards including asbestos and lead paint in the facility. As Pino describes it, “After that big project happened, the parents were still together and said, ‘What else can we work on [in the neighborhood]?’”

Pino leads a variety of initiatives as part of her work with LVEJO, such as combatting the pollution from “massive industrial facilities” near the community that causes health problems. She advocates for alternative energy solutions that not only create a healthier community but also offer residents employment opportunities.

Pino is also engaged in local anti-racism work, supporting organized efforts to counteract police brutality. She sees police violence and industrial pollution as part of the same “continuum of violence against black and brown communities.”

“There are] these industries perpetuating what we call slow violence, killing people slowly through their toxic poisons, and then you have the fast violence of literal physical attacks coming from the police and incarcerated systems,” she says.

As an Afro-Indigenous Latina

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who also identifies as queer, Pino views her identities as a strong asset for promoting self-determination among local community members who likewise come from underrepresented groups. In addition, she emphasizes the need for more women of color in the field of public policy, acknowledging that she also faces significant “structural barriers” as a result of her race and gender.

Despite these challenges, she encourages other young women of color to enter the field of social justice and public policy. “In order to make changes to broken systems while we figure out how to dismantle them,” she says, “we have to address them at structural levels, which means getting involved in decisions. It’s a way to directly exert some control over our own futures and our own lives.”

Ginger O’Donnell is a senior staff writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
Millions of dollars are spent every year on education policy research, but actual classroom teachers struggle to access it. Researchers normally don’t translate their findings into easy-to-read briefs that educators realistically have time to consume. Additionally, teachers are often left out of the process as government officials enact education policy based on that research.

These factors combined result in government policy and legislation often lacking important voices — those of the teachers who help make a difference on the front lines. To tackle this problem head-on, more K-12 teachers are running for elected office, where they can directly affect policy decisions, while others are pursuing public policy degrees at colleges and universities across the United States. Institute of Education Sciences (IES) director Mark Schneider calls the disconnect between teachers, education researchers, and policymakers the “last mile problem,” or the challenge of “getting information into the hands of the people who need it the most,” he says. Schneider says K-12 teachers want to participate in education research, yet many believe research is “done to them and not with them.”

But teachers have begun to take a stand, most notably in the 2018 midterm elections. A record number ran for public office and widespread teacher protests took place around the country regarding the lack of compensation and funding for public schools. Teachers felt the time had come for them to represent education in the public realm, says Jennifer Steele, EdD, an associate professor in the school of education at American University (AU) in Washington, D.C., and an affiliate faculty member in the university’s department of public administration and policy.

Steele, herself an educator who followed this path, says pursuing public policy degrees allows teachers to become better advocates for their students. “Part of my initial interest in getting a doctorate in education policy was to think about how to support evidence-based literacy practices in high school that prepare students to be college- and career-ready,” she says. “There’s a huge interest in education policy among teachers. … They’re intellectually curious and they’re driven by a desire to really make things better on a larger scale.”

Combining Policy and Practice

Educators are finding ways to enter the public policy and research realm, sometimes making the decision to leave the classroom to do so, according to Chris Curran, PhD, assistant professor of public policy at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC).

Before making this transition, however, gaining first-hand classroom experience is invaluable, he says. Curran began his career as a middle school science teacher in a disadvantaged area of rural Mississippi. After he noticed the impact of inequitable school funding, poverty, and racism, he decided to leave the classroom and

#FACTS

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) plans to spend more than $400 million on education research in fiscal year 2019, according to their website.
but rather embeds K-12 education topics within its social policy curriculum.

Students with an interest in this area are encouraged to take elective courses in the school of education, says Laura Bloomberg, PhD, dean of the Humphrey School and former member of the executive council at the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration. Students can also self-design a concentration in education policy or inequities.

Both Bloomberg and Steele advocate for more teacher voices when it comes to crafting and enacting educational policy. Public policy schools can require students to complete internships and gain exposure to real-world perspectives, Steele says. She also emphasizes the importance of courses in implementation science and stakeholder analysis, the latter of which involves understanding how a single policy change can affect different

### FACTS

Approximately 177 current teachers ran for state legislative seats in 2018, according to an Education Week analysis. At least 43 won their races.

The unique perspective educators bring to broader policy matters is something that Jahana Hayes, an educator and newly elected member of the U.S. House of Representatives, emphasized throughout her 2018 campaign, connecting education to larger social problems. As a congresswoman, Hayes advocates for teacher training and support, career readiness, and access to quality schools for vulnerable children. “Education saved my life,” she says on her website.
The following are examples of what teacher protests in 2018 and 2019 have accomplished:

- After nine days of striking by West Virginia public school teachers, Gov. Jim Justice agreed to a 5 percent salary increase.

- Shortly before educators in Oklahoma walked out of the classroom, Gov. Mary Fallin approved an average raise of $6,100 for teachers, $1,250 for support staff, and a $50 million increase in education funding. The teachers union had originally asked for $10,000 raises for teachers, $5,000 raises for support staff, and $200 million in education funding. After nine days of protests, Fallin did not offer additional funding.

- As a result of teacher protests in Kentucky, state lawmakers voted to increase per-pupil funding from $3,700 to $4,000 as part of the Support Education Excellence in Kentucky program. The Kentucky Education Association issued a statement saying the increase represented the highest amount ever appropriated per student.

- Following six days of protests in Arizona, Gov. Doug Ducey signed an education funding bill into law that will increase teacher pay by 20 percent over the next three years.

- Teachers in Colorado protested for five days and secured a 2.5 percent cost of living adjustment as well as a new health insurance contribution.

- The day before teachers walked out of their classrooms in North Carolina, Tim Moore, speaker of the state House of Representatives, told them they can expect average raises of 6.2 percent for the 2018-19 school year. However, they still protested for one day with no results. The North Carolina Association of Educators told CNN that they would fight back by working to elect more pro-education leaders to the state legislature.

- After Los Angeles teachers protested for six days earlier this year, the district agreed to hire more teachers in order to reduce average class size by four students by 2022. District officials also agreed to a 6 percent increase in pay for teachers. In addition, the district agreed to staff every school with a full-time nurse and librarian, as well as 17 more counselors across the region.

Sources: CNN and The Washington Post

**ALLEVIATING THE “LAST MILE PROBLEM”**

When asked how schools of public policy can fix the issue of information not reaching educators, Bloomberg says the field of education policy has a “translation issue” that can be alleviated by thinking about “what the consumer of our information needs.”

She emphasizes the importance of teaching public policy students the skill of translating detailed research papers into “succinct, evidence-based, very carefully worded but brief policy memos for a decision maker.” Such writings can help make complex information easier for busy classroom teachers to understand.

Steele believes another solution is using social media platforms like Twitter creatively to disseminate research results. In addition, she encourages researchers to make short videos summarizing their findings. “These gorgeous, high-production value videos that some research teams have made, … you can put those on YouTube and they are a great resource for a lot of people,” she says.

The latest education research doesn’t necessarily have to target those in the classroom, Steele adds. “We want our teachers to be aware of research and how it works, but we also need to realize that sometimes the district level and the state level is where the main level of education research often is, and that’s okay,” she says.

There are some inevitable limitations to collaboration between education policy researchers and teachers, says Stéphane Lavertu, PhD, associate professor in the John Glenn College of Public Affairs at Ohio State University and co-principal investigator for the university’s Education Governance and Accountability Project. Teachers tend to look for answers to complex problems, but research normally addresses narrow issues. Compiling findings over time instead of releasing them piecemeal might provide more holistic answers to complex questions, Lavertu says.

Bloomberg “loves the idea of more teachers preparing themselves with good policy expertise” but also worries more will leave the classroom because they feel they must in order to improve conditions for themselves and their students. “We also have to create an environment where people who say, ‘I want to teach. This is the most noble profession, and I want to do it for my career,’ feel like they can,” she says.

Even as teachers enter the world of politics and policymaking, the onus remains on researchers to make their information easier to access and understand for both educators in and out of the classroom, Steele says. “It’s really the job of researchers to bring greater public understanding.”

Ginger O’Donnell is a senior staff writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
The USC Sol Price School of Public Policy Initiative on Diversity, Social Justice and Inclusion launched in December 2015, formalizing and expanding the school’s existing activities, engaging students in promoting social justice and celebrating the richness that diversity adds to our communities, here and abroad.

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FORMER PRESIDENTS INSPIRE PUBLIC POLICY GRADUATES TO IMPROVE LIVES

By Dale Singer

On Krystle Grindley’s first day of graduate school, New Orleans was devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

Grindley had just graduated from the University of New Orleans and enrolled at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, where she was one of a cadre of students who have been inspired to go into public service because of a presidential example. Along with the later President George H.W. Bush, former President Barack Obama has also lent his name and vision to similar programs at the University of Chicago (U of C) and Columbia University.

Their examples serve as a guidepost for young people who want to improve lives everywhere. Grindley was one of them. When she saw the horrible damage to the city where she had spent four years, “it just struck me to the core.”

Grindley knew her experience in the Bush School would guide her back to Louisiana, where she decided to commit herself to public service. Now the public information officer for a parish in northwest Louisiana, Grindley says the school’s namesake led her to help push its commitment to a diverse student body, including the creation of a diversity committee.

“We wanted to make sure that everybody had the opportunity to learn about things outside our grad school bubble,” she said. “There was really an intentional effort to make sure people feel welcome and appreciated.”

Like Grindley, Ana Cristina Becerra Salas, an Obama Scholar in Chicago, says her program’s namesake motivated her to remember that “each of us comes from a different part of the world,” she says, “We keep in mind how important it is to help bring together people of different colors.”

Grindley, Salas, and other public policy scholars shared their experiences pursuing the legacies of these past presidents.

Program Inspired by Barack Obama

Ranjan Daniels, associate dean of the Harris School of Public Policy at U of C, says the Obama Scholars program grants full scholarships to help students from around the world combine academia with real-world experience. Likewise, the program at Columbia University in New York City offers opportunities for scholars.

“These are people in mid-career with an average age of 31, who have some work experience, and have been identified as emerging leaders,” Daniels says. “We didn’t want them to have to worry about funding so they can focus 100 percent on learning, content, building relationships, and developing scalable solutions to the problems they are passionate about. … They’re not here just to get an ivory tower education but to experience policy and problem solving in Chicago. They are spending time with community leaders working on the same problems they are working on.”

In the words of one member of the current class, the scholars, who come from everywhere from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, are “dreamers and doers.” As the former president says in a welcoming video, the program is designed to “inspire, empower, and connect the next generation of civic leaders.”

For current program scholar Sri Andini Handayani, moving into the public sphere after graduation will mean bringing what she learns back home to Indonesia, where she has conducted research on violence against children. “I believe in the power of young people,” she says. “I really want to work with young people in leadership and management.”

She hopes her public policy
training helps her find ways to make their lives better. “They’re struggling to find jobs and market themselves,” Handayani says. “I’m really grateful I’ve had mentorship in my life and my work, and now through this program you can see how amazing mentors are able to give you the perspective on how to shape a career.”

The diversity of her class makes the experience that much richer, she adds. “Interacting with the different scholars helps me unpack the interconnectedness of one sector with the other,” Handayani says. “It’s something that I really did not get back home.”

Salas, whose work in her home country of Peru involved forestry, says the program experience has opened her eyes to how various academic fields are connected. The multitude of countries represented in her class help forge those links.

“We have created our own community, like a family,” Salas says. “Each of us brings a different voice and a fresh perspective, and we’ve talked about how we can take advantage of that. I’ve been able to learn about political systems. It was really nice to be able to interact.”

In the Obama tradition of community organizing, Salas worked with people in Chicago to share and hone her skills. “We bring diversity,” she says, “and we don’t forget about how important it is to bring together people of different colors.”

Texas A&M Channels George H.W. Bush’s Beliefs

Bush’s belief in public service as a noble calling is more than just a mantra,” says Matt Upton, PhD, assistant dean for diversity, career, and student services. “It’s in the heart of the people who come here.”

The late president’s vision drives the Bush School, which was founded in 1997. In its early years Bush was actively involved, sitting in on classes and actually portraying the president in simulations, Upton says.

The program has an enrollment of 340 students, about 25 percent from underrepresented groups. A weekend dedicated to diversity plays a major part in attracting students from a variety of backgrounds. “We want people to come here and see a culture and a climate and a welcoming environment,” Upton says. “We’re always talking about what else we can do to improve the climate here to make sure students feel like they are included no matter where they come from.”

As in the Obama program, Texas A&M provides support for students who want to work in the public sector, where salaries are often less than those in private industry. The university helps make sure individuals who go on to the public realm aren’t saddled with massive student debt. “We think that is working,” Upton says. “A large percent of our graduates go out and work in the public sphere, following in President Bush’s life and career.”

Graduates of the program take a special interest in diversity. Priscilla Barbour, who completed her degree in 2016 and now works for an energy company in Dallas, liked working with elected officials on the local, state, and federal level and the fact that the curriculum was not just theory-based but emphasized practicality.

Diversity in the program is a work in progress, she says. “The school is not afraid of going outside the box to find candidates who are definitely qualified to be in the Bush school program but also able to go into public service once they are out of school. They’re not only preparing the next wave of public servants, but they understand that it’s important that students look like the public you’re going to serve.”

For Grindley, the Hurricane Katrina experience brought the idea of inclusion close to home. The federal government’s response to the disaster was a case study in policy playing out in a vacuum, she says. “It was a tragedy, it was horrible, but I can’t imagine a better way to get involved.”

That involvement, she adds, is what public service is all about, and it’s something she learned at the Bush School.

Dale Singer is a contributing writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
Public Policy Professors Work Within the Ranks to Include Race-Conscious Dialogue

Difficult Conversations Increase Empathy, Expand Thinking

BY KELSEY LANDIS
Woodrow Wilson has long been considered the father of public administration. The 28th president of the United States focused on developing a framework for shifting the government’s administrative duties to agencies and civil servants, thereby separating the business of governing from political and legislative activities.

Wilson, however, was a white man born in 1856. While his ideas constitute much of the basis of today’s public administration curricula, issues of race, diversity, and inclusion were hardly at the forefront in Wilson’s time. He wasn’t necessarily a bad man, says Vanessa Lopez-Littleton, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Health, Human Services, and Public Policy at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB). But his ideas, Lopez-Littleton says, did cause insult and harm to decades of citizens through racist implementation of public policy decisions. “Segregation and racism were integrated into our federal bureaucracy,” Lopez-Littleton says. “You have to talk about the full scope and full range of our history.”

Professors such as Lopez-Littleton have started the push to bring discussions of race and equity to public administration curricula, which have historically lacked in considering how policy decisions affect underrepresented citizens. Some universities, such as the University of Baltimore, have dedicated entire courses to those dialogues, while professors at other schools have developed methods for infusing race-conscious education into existing coursework.

Their work is paying off, says Mariglynn Edlins, PhD, assistant professor in the School of Health and Human Services at the University of Baltimore (UB). “The narrative is changing. There is more in the water than 10 years ago, but we’ve got to find a way to take these methods [and make a bigger] impact,” Edlins says. “[Students] are craving authenticity, venting, and being heard, for authority figures to legitimize their feelings about how people like them are being treated.”

Despite the changing landscape, only 14 percent of master’s in public administration (MPA) curricula addressed race, according to the most recent data available from a 2007 study by two professors at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), Barbara Hewins-Maroney, and Ethel Williams. Even in the curricula that did address race, the issue largely came up in human resources classes and was overlooked in other courses, according to Anthony M. Starke, a PhD candidate at the UNO School of Public Administration.

Public administration students go on to become the country’s leaders and decision makers. If they are not prepared to have conversations about race and equity, there is a risk they will not be ready to serve or empathize with underrepresented populations, Starke says, thus perpetuating institutional racism and marginalization more than a century after the birth of public administration.

**Methods for Infusing Curricula**

With 36 credit hours and 13 courses in a typical MPA program, a lack of coursework dedicated to race-conscious dialogue is in some ways a structural issue, Starke says. Much of the focus remains on teaching the technical skill sets required to do public policy work such as budgeting or finance, while broader issues are

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**Classroom methods for introducing race-conscious dialogue**

**Starke: Teach students to think creatively while still working within the parameters of their future jobs by providing case studies where a public administrator is faced with an ethical problem and pursues an option that avoids racist outcomes.**

**Lopez-Littleton: Incorporate African American, Hispanic, female figures, and others from underrepresented groups in lessons about important people in public administration so students can “see themselves represented in the classroom, in the material we cover, in the people we talk about.”**

**Starke: Use Critical Race Theory (CRT) to teach the threat of technical rationality and challenge nervousness around racial dialogues. Resource: Race and Social Equity: A Nervous Area of Government by Susan Gooden.**

**Lopez-Littleton: Make sure students know they can approach the professor with concerns about racial dialogues. Tell students, “Whatever experience you’re having, if it’s not a positive learning experience, we can fix it. We want you to have a valuable experience.”**

**Edlins: Allow students to use not just books, but videos, images, television shows, animators, or whatever they can connect with as starting discussion points on empathy and race. “Students aren’t crazy about being asked to do a lot of extra work. For better or for worse, reading is far outside of a lot of my students’ normal frame of reference,” Edlins says.**

**Edlins: Create a class portfolio where students can show off their work on a website. See an example at empathyinservice.com.**
not always addressed. As a result, public policy workers sometimes hide behind what is known as “technical rationality,” or the act of rationalizing negative impacts as just “part of the job,” Starke says.

“[Public administrators] sometimes focus on the technical aspects of administration, where race-based and racist outcomes are a result of simply doing the job, rather than thinking about the outcomes and the way the work we do is affecting different groups,” Starke says. “This is a way to distance themselves from the racist outcomes of doing their work — just ‘doing what I’m supposed to’ as opposed to thinking about it.”

Starke and other professors have developed pedagogical methods to help students recognize trends such as technical rationality in their future work, and those professors have given them the tools they need to make changes.

But making even small changes at a university or in one’s own classroom isn’t always easy. Lopez-Littleton came to her current California Central Coast institution from University of Central Florida in Orlando. When she started teaching at CSUMB, she says she experienced the culture shock that comes with moving from one coast to the other. She had to learn to interact with a more diverse student body eager to engage in the debate about social justice. “I came to understand the concept of social equity. I knew what it meant prior to coming here, but to actually see how to roll it out and implement it in the classroom, I didn’t really get it [before],” Lopez-Littleton says.

Even as a black woman herself, Lopez-Littleton says she was uncomfortable at first introducing difficult conversations about race in her classes, which sometimes only have a few black students. During her undergraduate studies at Louisiana State University, she says, “We didn’t have any of these conversations. I never had a black professor. I certainly never had a black female professor. I didn’t see myself reflected in any of this content,” Lopez-Littleton says. “I feel like I’m just arriving.”

Both Lopez-Littleton and Starke say one method for beginning conversations about recognizing racist policies is to introduce the idea of “brave spaces” as opposed to “safe spaces” in classrooms. Prepare students to be uncomfortable, Starke says, rather than making them feel safe. “When people are confronted with racism and they recognize their complicity within it, if you provide them with a safe space, you can only push the limits so far,” Starke says. “Set the tone that these conversations are going to be difficult and uncomfortable.”

Evaluations are not always glowing for her classes, Lopez-Littleton acknowledges. A student of hers commented in an evaluation that the discussions about race caused feelings of discomfort. Lopez-Littleton says that needs to happen in order to grow. “I don’t mind students being uncomfortable, but I need them to understand [these conversations] are a lens. It’s a racialized lens, and what you see might make you uncomfortable, but it’s what you do with that discomfort that matters,” she says.

Over time, Lopez-Littleton morphed the Introduction to Public Administration course she teaches into a class that focuses on social equity for three weeks of the semester. The class uses the criminal justice system to understand why different groups of people need different public services. Students look at how poor people are treated within the system, from the initial interaction with police to sentencing. In Fall 2019, the course will have an ethnic studies tag on it because a portion will be dedicated to talking about race and ethnicity.

Further reading on methods for including race-conscious dialogues

- Ready to serve the public? The role of empathy in public service education programs by Marigynn Edlins, PhD, and Stephanie Dolamore, PhD
- Administrative racism: Public administration education and race by Anthony Starke, Nuri Heckler, and Janiece Mackey
- Advancing social justice and racial equity in the public sector by Vanessa Lopez-Littleton, PhD, Brandi Blessett, PhD, and Julie Burr
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The Importance of Empathy

The murder of Freddie Gray on April 12, 2015 rocked Baltimore, Md., sending the city into an uproar of daily protests. Police arrested the 25-year-old black man on suspicion of possessing a knife illegally. Officers failed to secure him properly in the back of their van, and Gray later died of spinal cord injuries. Though the coroner’s office ruled Gray’s death a homicide and six officers were charged in connection with his death, one case ended in a mistrial, three were found not guilty, and the remaining charges were later dropped.

To Edlins, the interaction between Gray and Baltimore police was a fundamental failure in the way public servants should interact with private citizens. Gray’s story was just one of many examples of how public policy lacks empathy, she says. In recent years, she has seen reports of police shootings, negative interactions between children and school resource officers, and government shutdowns. “Everywhere I looked there were these interactions that went wrong,” Edlins says. “[Leaders] were determined to do what they wanted to do without thinking of the stories and emotions and experiences of people on the other side.”

Edlins’ research determined that empathy — the ability to recognize, understand, and respond to the feelings of another — “offers a way to improve these interactions and bring them more in line with expected public service values,” but she wondered where the training was for public administration students who could help implement empathetic policy in the future.

No framework for teaching empathy existed in the public administration classroom at UB, and students initially shied away from talking about race. It didn't help that some older public administration professors “from certain backgrounds” represented, inadvertently or not, a disconnect with young people, Edlins adds.

To address the lack of empathy training, the university approved a class called “Ethics and Empathy for Public Servants.” The course description reads as follows: “Explores the role of ethics and empathy in the work of public servants, with a goal of preparing students for careers in public service. Relying on novels, short stories, films, television and other stories, this course provides students case examples of scenarios where ethics and empathy are relevant and/or missing. Through the course, students have the opportunity to explore the challenges, benefits, and opportunities associated with ethical and empathetic service delivery.”

“We were so emboldened by our need to start a conversation, we went for it big,” Edlins says. “We took a model to practice and wrestled with it. The big takeaway

Lopez-Littleton says, marking an institutional step toward making these conversations officially part of the curriculum. “In my opinion, that’s huge,” she says.
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“…from this course is curiosity. What we’re lacking is a fundamental curiosity about the ‘other.’”

Preparing professors to train future public servants in empathy is necessary to creating equitable public policy practices, but public administration schools must also be prepared to hire diverse faculty members, Lopez-Littleton says. “Students need to see themselves represented in front of the classroom,” she says. “There’s not a lot of diversity when it comes to tenure-track faculty … We are not getting diverse pools in higher education because we are not developing the relationships and the pipeline.”

At least one group is working to increase that pipeline, according to a spokeswoman for American University. The Washington, D.C. institution recently founded the Public Affairs Diversity Alliance specifically to increase diversity among faculty.

As universities work to line up public administration curricula with the need for race-conscious dialogue, individual professors say they are chipping away where they can at the old foundations in order to paint a broader picture for their students. “There’s a small group of us and we’re doing it,” Lopez-Littleton says. “As time goes on, I think we’re going to have some kind of an impact.”

Starke says he doesn’t expect changing the foundation of schools of public administration to be easy, but he hopes it will happen over time. “We really need to be working together,” Starke says. “It’s a labor of love. It’s something I think about constantly. It’s such a pervasive issue that at times you feel like you don’t know where to begin … but it’s our responsibility to create pockets and spaces to have these discussions in the meantime.”

Kelsey Landis is Editor-in-Chief for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
CARDIAC SURGEON

The Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Department of Surgery at the University of Utah is actively recruiting a Cardiac Surgeon at the Assistant or Associate Professor level on either the clinical or tenure-eligible track. Candidates will be ABTS board-certified and be at least 5-years out from completing an ACGME-approved Thoracic Surgery Residency. The successful candidate will be expected to perform the entire spectrum of adult cardiac surgery. Administrative and leadership responsibilities will include Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgical Services at the Salt Lake City Veterans Affairs Hospital. This position will support the Academic mission of the Division and includes participation in outreach efforts in the region. All faculty will serve as Attending Surgeons at the University of Utah Hospitals and Clinics, the Salt Lake Veteran’s Administration Health Care System and the Huntsman Cancer Institute. In addition, any applicant will be expected to actively participate in the teaching of Thoracic Surgery residents.

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Interested applicants should contact:
Craig H. Selzman, MD
Professor & Chief
Division of CT Surgery
Heather Clark, Division of CT Surgery
Heather.Clark@hsc.utah.edu

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SURGICAL ONCOLOGIST

The Division of General Surgery, Department of Surgery, at the University of Utah School of Medicine, Huntsman Cancer Institute is recruiting a surgical oncologist with a specialty interest in melanoma / sarcoma. The applicant should be at the assistant or associate professor level with an interest in clinical trial and/or translational research. Applicants with research training such as an MPH or MSCI are preferable but not mandatory. The track will be commensurate with experience, but tenure track with an interest in clinical trial development or translational research is preferred. The appropriate individual will be invested in the melanoma/sarcoma clinical program, education and research. Completion of fellowship training in surgical oncology is desired. Those with a strong interest in surgical education with a career goal of residency program director will also be considered but this is not mandatory. The University of Utah, Huntsman Cancer Institute sees the highest rate, per capita, of melanomas in the United States, and has a well-established multi-disciplinary clinical and research team invested in the treatment and prevention of melanoma.

Interested applicants must apply at: http://utah.peopleadmin.com/postings/85887

For additional information, contact:
Courtney Scaife, M.D.
Professor, Section Chief, Surgical Oncology
Vice Chair for Cancer Affairs in Surgery
University of Utah
Huntsman Cancer Institute
courtney.scaife@hci.utah.edu

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For additional information, contact:
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Criminal justice students at Fayetteville State University (FSU) in North Carolina recently launched a website designed to raise awareness about the different forms of bias and discrimination that exist in the United States. Created as a capstone project for a special topics course on hate crimes, the student-produced site provides information and links on subjects such as the history, language and symbolism, and modern trends of bias and racism in the U.S.

The site, titled “Breaking the Hate in the United States,” includes a wide range of student-selected materials, from news articles and government resources to songs and videos, each revealing some aspect of how hate originates, oppresses, and can be overcome. It also explores how various populations, including religious minorities and women, become targets of prejudice and hatred.

Professor Emily Lenning, PhD, led the project and says her students were blown away by the quality of the finished product. “They gained insight into things they hadn’t thought about before, such as how ideology, policy, and behavior interact to reproduce or challenge systems of oppression,” Lenning says.

A majority of students at the historically black institution are African American, but the class also included “Hispanic and white students, LGBTQ students, and students representing a broad range of ages and religious and political beliefs,” Lenning says.

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