Overview
This newsletter provides members of the Villanova University Chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha important information regarding the Chapter’s development and progress. In lieu of meeting minutes, this newsletter is posted tri-annually (September, January, June) to communicate the relevant topics discussed and decisions made by the Chapter’s officers.

Spring Events
Three events are scheduled for this spring. All current members of the Villanova Chapter, all MPA program members, alumni/ae, and any other interested parties are invited to attend both meetings. The meeting dates and agendas are as follows:

- **PAA Sponsored Service Opportunity at Cradles to Crayons**
  - February 7, 2015, 10am - noon
  - Conshohocken, PA

- **Spring Meeting: Networking and Career Seminar:**
  - “Finding Your Vocation in Public Service”
  - March 12, 2015 @ 7:30

- **Analytics in the Public Sector Webinar:**
  - April 23rd – Time TBD

Spring Networking Event
The Chapter’s annual Spring Seminar is a "Networking and Career Panel." Invited public servants provide timely information concerning the practical matters associated with entry into a career in public service, including but not limited to: conducting a successful job search, career advice, and accessing and utilizing professional resources. Panelists are MPA alumni and include representatives from local, state, and federal government as well as non-profit organizations. The panelists are asked to share about their professional experience and provide students with insight about how they used networking as a tool to move within and outside of their organization or across sectors. This event benefits students and alumni who are either looking forward to starting a new position or those who want a change in their career, but are unsure about how or where to begin. The panelists will bring a unique perspective to the event, which will benefit attendees of all ages and levels of experience.

Class of 2015 Induction
- Thursday, May 14th
- Dougherty Hall, West Lounge
- Reception to follow ceremony

Students must have a minimum of 18 credits and a 3.8 GPA to be eligible for consideration
The Vocation to Public Service: Answering the Call in 3D

On Thursday, October 9, 2014, the Villanova University Chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha presented its annual Fall Colloquium, “The Vocation to Public Service.” This year’s event featured Marquis Coates (MPA 2011) whose presentation, “The Vocation to Public Service: Answering the Call in 3D,” described his call to start the nonprofit Tools For Success, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to providing mentorship and academic and professional supports for youth in Philadelphia. Coates depicted the process of starting a nonprofit, the benefits of networking for and marketing a nonprofit, as well as the importance of staying true to one’s vision despite the temptation to seek a higher salary elsewhere. Coates also highlighted the success of his organization’s partnership with K&G Fashion Superstore, a partnership born by Coates' leap of faith: simply asking if K&G would be willing to work with Tools for Success.

More importantly, Mr. Coates likened the vocation to public service to a cell phone set on vibrate, saying, “Not everybody can hear it ring, but you’re the person who feels it.” Mr. Coates then challenged his audience to answer their calls, explaining his call to service in the form of “3 D's” – Desire to Make a Difference, Develop Your Vision, and Dream Big. The audience responded positively to this informative and motivational presentation when Coates said, “When you feel your passion, they believe it.” The audience undoubtedly believed his passion.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Coates was awarded an honorary membership in the Villanova Chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha.

To view Marquis Coates’ presentation, click here.

MPA Service Opportunity – Cradles to Crayons

On Saturday, February 7, 2015, PAA will be sponsoring a service opportunity with Cradles to Crayons in Conshohocken, PA. Their mission reads: “Cradles to Crayons provides children from birth through age 12, living in homeless or low-income situations, with the essential items they need to thrive - at home, at school and at play. We supply these items free of charge by engaging and connecting communities that have with communities that need.”

Participants will inspect, sort, and package new and like-new donations into customized “KidPacks.” This will include sorting clothes, organizing outfits, gathering school supplies, and cleaning toys.

To participate in this service project, email the MPA Administrative Assistant, Michele Griffin: michele.griffin@villanova.edu.
VU-PAA Sponsoring Analytics Webinar

VU-PAA is sponsoring an interactive webinar, “Utilizing Analytics in the Public Sector” on Thursday, April 23rd. The webinar will be held live and viewers will have the opportunity to participate. More details coming soon regarding our webinar speaker and time.

Brief Career Profiles of VU-PAA Alumni

Carolyn McCreary – Township Manager, Plumstead Township, Bucks County, PA

I began my career in local government as the Accounting Manager for Upper Gwynedd Township, and moved to Lansdale Borough to become their Finance Director. It was here that I really saw all the nuances of local government. From dealing with resident issues, to navigating local politics, to partnering with other government agencies; all led me to believe that I found a career that matched my personality and abilities.

With the support of the Borough Manager I enrolled in Villanova’s MPA program, and was able to take my experiences to date and learn even more from the professors, instructors and my classmates. The small class sizes forced me out of my comfort zone, and made me more confident when sharing my experiences in local government even when they contradicted the traditional teachings about public administration. The program also allowed me to think about the profession and its continuing impact and legacy in broader ways, leading me to where I am today.

I have been employed as the Manager for Plumstead Township in Bucks County for almost 7 years and at this point in time I plan to stay where I am for a variety of reasons. No two days are the same, and there are days my well planned list of things to get done is not even touched. However, working in local government has afforded me the opportunity to see first-hand how the work I do affects people’s lives each day. I would recommend students consider this career track as it provides a necessary service and hands-on learning each day.

Kevin Huse, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the Social Security Administration (SSA), Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Criminal Investigations Division

I currently serve as the Special Agent-in-Charge of the Social Security Administration (SSA), Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Criminal Investigations Division, where I work to protect the SSA and its programs from fraud, waste, and abuse. During my career with the SSA/OIG, I worked as the Resident Agent-in-Charge of the Washington, D.C. office, as a Special Agent in the Philadelphia, PA office, and as an investigator detailed to the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

The MPA program at Villanova provides more than the basic fundamentals of public service and government management. With the mixture of practical and theoretical exercises throughout the curriculum, I gained an understanding of the public workforce and how to navigate the complex networks of the Federal government.

When facing a challenge in the government, don’t immediately accept the established process or assume that someone already has the best answer. By challenging the established process, government leaders gain experience and ultimately excel by developing independent and innovative ideas.
Did You Know?

You have access to thousands of publications, such as Public Administration Review, through the Online Falvey Memorial Library? Click here for a link to the Falvey Memorial Library.

National PAA Sponsoring Two Competitions

Student Manuscript Competition

PAA will recognize an outstanding student paper. Nominated papers will be judged on the basis of relevance of the topic, appropriate use of methodology, quality of presentation, originality, innovativeness, clarity, and academic quality. To apply, candidates should submit an electronic copy of the paper in MS Word format that does not exceed 20 typed pages double-spaced and a letter of support from a faculty sponsor to awards@naspaa.org. The 20 pages is inclusive of all context; appendixes and references are not included in the 20 page limit. Submissions should indicate the award name and the student’s name in the email subject line. Nominations should be received by June 30, 2015.

Student Competition

Pi Alpha Alpha is proud to support the NASPAA student competition, which will be held on Saturday, February 28, 2015. The competition is a dynamic and immersive competition for current students at NASPAA schools. Student participation is free and schools are encouraged to send one or more students to compete. Students will arrive at the competition and be grouped into small teams to tackle a current challenge facing today’s public service leaders. Student participants will meet colleagues from other schools, utilize a simulation, and solve problems that current law and policy makers are facing. Students from the winning team will receive national recognition as well as additional opportunities which we be detailed after the simulation topic is announced. More details are available at http://studentcompetition.naspaa.org/.

Food for Thought - Choosing a Career in Public Administration: The Lessons of History

“Whatever the imperfections of our public agencies, local and state governments and non-profit organizations, the success of their operations truly depends on the commitment of people who always have been willing to step up and make a difference. No matter what form public administration takes now or in the future, one reality remains constant: It is a discipline that works for the public interest. This, I believe, is the enduring reason to choose a career as a public administrator, and it is just as true today as it was a century ago.”


Thank You, Stephanie!

Stephanie Nissen, 2011 MPA graduate and current Assistant Director of the Villanova MPA program, has recently accepted a position with Villanova’s new College of Professional Studies as its Instructional Designer. Stephanie has been a major help to the VU-PAA. The MPA community will miss you, but we’re happy you will still be in the Villanova community. Congratulations and good luck in your new role!

Pi Alpha Alpha Chapter Officers

Chapter President: Bridget Boston
Chapter Secretary: David Grady
Chapter Advisor: Fr. Richard M. Jacobs, OSA

Pi Alpha Alpha