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 (August, January, June) to communicate to members the relevant topics discussed and decisions made by the Chapter’s officers.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Overview 1
- Annual Calendar of Events 1
- Induction Ceremony Recap 2
- In the spotlight 3-6
- Chapter Advisor’s Note 7

Annual Calendar of Events

Save the dates for our upcoming events for the 2017-2018 year:

- Fall Networking Event—September 28th—5:30 pm
- Professional Development Webinar—November 7—12:00 pm
- Spring Networking Event—March 22nd—5:00 pm
- Induction Ceremony—May 17th—5:00 pm

Other events are being scheduled. VU-PAA members will be notified by email.
Congratulations to our 2016 VU-PAA Inductees!

On May 18, 2017, Fr. President Peter Donohue, OSA, Dean of Graduate Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dr. Christine Palus, and the Chair of the Public Administration Department, Dr. Catherine Wilson, inducted the VU PAA Class of 2017. Various MPA faculty offered reflections about each inductee. Following the Induction, dessert, the traditional champagne toast to the new members concluded the ceremony, and good conversation.

Welcome Our Newest VU-PAA Members!

Joshua Jack Augustin  
Jessica N. Barnett  
Samantha J. Byers  
Stephanie Fisher  
Nicole M. Fulmino  
Emily Grace Kane  
Sobha M. Ketterer  
Mike Lontoc  
Michael Mastrangelo  
Kellee Nicole McDaniel  
Michael D. Miller  

Maria Miranda  
Judith Patricia Barnard Mosso  
Rigaud Yves Noel  
Timothy J. Smith  
Devan M. Stewart  
Quyen H. Thai  
Nathan Vader Wyse  
Lynn Weinberger  
Jean Wintz-Dabney  
Janet Patricia Wong  
Samantha J. Wright
Jeffrey Eastman, MPA ‘16

1. What made you choose Villanova for your MPA degree, especially considering you were searching for an online program?

I chose the Villanova MPA program because it is one of the best and most renowned MPA programs in the country. When I learned of the online offering of the program, I knew that it would be a perfect fit for me as commuting from Iowa was not going to be conducive. My instructors were absolutely amazing, and I would place the quality and caliber of the Villanova staff up against any other university in the country.

2. Tell us a little bit about your job. How has your Villanova MPA degree helped you in your career?

As a Community Health Consultant for the Iowa Department of Public Health, I am responsible for regulation and technical assistance provided to EMS services in Iowa.

3. Any advice for current MPA students?

Study HARD. The things you are learning today will be IMMENSELY useful tomorrow. You WILL use ALL of it (if you haven’t already), I promise.

“My MPA education gave me the tools to be successful because I was more adequately prepared to analyze, interpret, and understand grants, regulations, and interpersonal interactions in government environments.”
Andrea Cohen, MPA ‘14

1. Tell us a little bit about your experience in the MPA program. What made you choose Villanova for your MPA degree?

Attending Villanova’s MPA program was off-the-charts fabulous! I have only positive memories and wonderful things to say about it. After completing my undergraduate degree, I had always intended to return to college for more learning and perhaps another degree. Twenty years later, I did it! And Villanova’s skilled, caring faculty, and administrators helped!

Having been born in Philadelphia and raised in New Jersey, I was well aware of Villanova’s reputation for high-quality programs and happy, successful graduates. After researching many public and private online MPA programs, I selected Villanova’s MPA program not only because of its reputation and affordability, but also because applying was so easy to do, rolling start dates allowed me to begin at any time and take courses in any order (after the gateway Public Administration Theory course), and I could participate from any location. After enrolling, I discovered and I was particularly impressed with, and challenged by, the: high touch environment – yes, even from an online program; level of student engagement, collaboration, and competition; intensity of requirements and coursework; high caliber of teaching and instructors; and access to student support and resources. Early on, maybe halfway through the gateway course, my husband remarked that he had not anticipated I’d be so busy, reading and writing as much as I was, studying and working so hard, etc. Reflecting a fairly common, and I might add incorrect perception, he said, “…as an online program, I thought you just paid your money, and got your degree!” Ha – we know better, don’t we? Little did he know, that was just the beginning! I was learning a lot, meeting amazing students and professors, and gaining clarity about my abilities and knowledge as well as receiving much-desired feedback designed to increase my self-awareness and expand my talents. I was hooked.
2. Tell us a little bit about your job. How has your Villanova MPA degree helped you in your career?

For over 17 years, I have been working in public higher education administration at the University of California Santa Cruz (UC Santa Cruz). Prior to that, I was an associate at a California-based environmental multiparty dispute resolution company. For the past four years, in the role as the Principal Analyst Special Projects Manager in the Office of the Chancellor and Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, I have been consulting and collaborating with campus and community leaders while managing high-profile executive recruitments for top-level campus leadership roles – Vice Chancellors, Vice Provosts, and Deans; implementing and managing programs for executive leadership development and personnel reviews; engaging in strategic and long-range planning and development; strategizing and performing fundraising; and, guiding or leading other special projects, as needed. I manage and staff committees, develop and implement policies and projects (and their timelines), collect and analyze data, network and orchestrate events, interact with donors and potential donors and raise money, and craft communications, proposals, and budgets. I strive to ensure my supervisors and teammates are briefed and well-prepared for anything, "look good," and continuously aim to improve and streamline systems and processes whenever possible.

Obtaining Master’s-level training and the MPA degree helped me develop a clearer understanding of my existing strengths, knowledge, and abilities and my areas for growth, learning, and improvement. Villanova’s caring, talented, focused, and savvy faculty (and administrators) provided opportunities to practice skills and try new techniques while encouraging and instilling confidence in me. I was extremely grateful to observe and experience the many ways that instructors supported student learning and modeled professional communication and leadership. As a result, the program helped me honed my professional communication and improve my skillfulness when managing delicate political situations at work. I also met intelligent, engaged, diverse, kind, considerate and trustworthy people "like me" with an eye towards serving the greater good. As a result, I expanded my professional network of people who can count on to brainstorm and bounce ideas around.
The MPA degree sent a clear message to those around me and to the campus leadership that I was serious about my career in the service of others. I am repetitive here, but, I learned a lot in Villanova's MPA program. Last, I would be remiss if I didn’t say it. Academics love initials, so it definitely helps to have the MPA abbreviation after my name in my email signature.

3. Any advice for current MPA students?

I would suggest:

- Acknowledge, appreciate and thank the people who help you. As a leader, accomplishments and successes attributed to you are very likely due – in part or on the whole – to the contributions of many other supportive people who assist you.
- As an MPA, you have status as a subject matter expert, and with that status comes great responsibility to provide balanced, ethical, equitable, and just counsel and guidance to everyone we serve.
- Stay focused, but remain flexible and open to new information and ideas. Continue to learn.
- Don’t try to solve everyone’s problems. Instead, ask strategic questions so people can improve their own problem solving skills.
- Maintain realistic and sustainable work-life balance with exercise and personal interests/hobbies outside of work. Carve out this time as “sacred,” schedule it on your calendar within your regular day, hold it dear and don’t let work commitments override your personal time. You need it to stay healthy, de-stress, and “recharge.”
- Have your latest, greatest 15-30 second “self-brag” at-the-ready, just in case you have a moment with someone who is interested.
- And, “don’t sweat the small stuff” (Carlson, 1997).

KUDOS to the four VU-PAA members who joined the “Tolle Lege Circle” in 2017: Travis Akers Christian Isham Adam Kuczynski Kathryn Monet
Chapter Advisor’s Message

With so many good things happening with our Chapter, I am disappointed to report to VU-PAA Chapter members that, as the Chapter’s Constitution mandates, no on-campus student member volunteered to serve as either Chapter President or Secretary for the 2017-2018 academic year. While that’s disappointing, be assured that doesn’t mean the quality of the Chapter’s program and initiatives will decline. It just means I’ll be serving in these dual roles for the upcoming academic year.

Planning is already well underway for the two major chapter events: The Networking Event and the Colloquium. This year, to align these events better with the Department’s course offerings and schedule, the Networking Event is being moved to the fall semester and the Colloquium to the spring semester. With this change, the public service minors who are taking the capstone course during the spring semester will be in attendance at the 2018 Spring Colloquium for the first time, providing them an exemplar of someone who’s life and work model “The Vocation to Public Service.”

In addition, four VU-PAA sponsored webinars are currently at various places in the planning process. I am very pleased to announce Lou Kassa will host a webinar titled:

“Crisis Management (Event + Response = Opportunity)”

This professional development webinar will be broadcast live:

November 7, 2017 at 12:00 noon

Lou currently serves as Vice President, Chief Operating Officer for Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center, Baruch S. Blumberg Institute, and Hepatitis B Foundation. As the event nears a link will be sent to the entire MPA community so everyone will be able to attend. Please sure to attend and participate online in what promises to be an excellent webinar!

In the early fall, the annual VU-PAA Membership Renewal Drive will begin. Since the Chapter was chartered in 2010, 166 members have been initiated. Of those members, 96 (or 58%) have maintained their membership and 70 (or 42%) have lapsed as members. The Membership Renewal Drive is an important Chapter activity which aims at building an active and involved membership base as well as an endowment of $100,000. The goal is to use the interest on the endowment to defray expenses for new members with the Chapter paying the cost of initiation. Last year’s successful Membership Renew Drive raised an additional $3,000 for the endowment which now boasts a balance of $12.6k+.

As always, if you have any ideas or suggestions to further improve our Chapter, please do not hesitate to contact me at richard.jacobs@vilanova.edu.

Meanwhile, the new semester begins in a few, all-too-short weeks!