

IMPACT

School of Government Hosts the World's Premier Public Management Conference

by Sonja Matanovic

On June 11–14, 2019, the UNC School of Government successfully hosted the 2019 Public Management Research Conference (PMRC). It is the leading public management and administration research conference and the keystone event of the Public Management Research Association (PMRA). PMRC brings together scholars from across the country and around the world to learn from each other and make professional connections.

Hosting PMRC is a significant opportunity for any institution to showcase their academic impact on this field of study. This year's event showcased the School

of Government to its professional peers from a faculty scholarship and research perspective and from a venue and campus perspective. Dean Mike Smith said, "It is a brilliant example of how our work depends on the talent and hard work of so many different people—faculty and an exceptionally talented and committed professional staff. In other words, we are successful because we operate as 'One School.'"

The Path to Hosting

Becoming the host institution for PMRC 2019 was not easy. The School submitted its first proposal in 2014 to host the

event in 2017. The case had to be made that the Knapp-Sanders Building could support more than 400 outside guests and that the UNC-Chapel Hill campus—and the Research Triangle in general—would be an attractive place for visitors to come from all over the world. A second proposal in 2017, led by faculty members Leisha DeHart-Davis, Whitney Afonso, Willow Jacobson, Rick Morse, and Bill Rivenbark, secured the 2019 sponsorship.



About 450 participants, representing more than 140 institutions and 19 countries, came to the School of Government for PMRC 2019.

continued on page 3

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER FALL • 2019

CONTENTS

- 2 Director's Column:
Bill Rivenbark
- 3 Engaging Local
Government Leaders
- 4 Spring 2019 Graduation
- 5 On the Move
- 6 True Carolina Blue:
Tom Bennett
- 8 Upcoming Events

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN



Bill Rivenbark
919.962.3707
rivenbark@unc.edu

What a great time of the year for the Carolina MPA program! The new academic year is upon us. In looking back, 81 students graduated from the MPA program in 2018–19 who now possess the necessary competencies to become the next generation of public service leaders. In looking to the future, we've welcomed our two new fall cohorts—one for the on-campus format and another for the online format—as we continue to recruit the very best to Carolina. One of the main reasons for our continued success is our dedicated alumni.

Our alumni support the MPA program in so many ways, including attending Happy Hour Hubs and participating in the annual Assessment Center. We received financial gifts from more than 300 Carolina MPA alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends of the program last year. Because of this outstanding support, the MPA program successfully raised more than \$240,000 in donations, including a generous gift made by Doug and Sharon Rothwell that is allowing us to conduct a strategic planning process. As I discussed in my previous column, the program is taking a hard look at where we want to be in five years given the competitive landscape that all MPA programs face in a constantly changing environment.

This total also includes the Alumni Association Board's efforts to grow the Diversity in Public Service Scholarship and Activities Fund through its Diversity Initiative:

You + Me = \$333. They are working to raise \$50,000 for the endowment by December 31, 2019; to date more than \$30,000 has been raised. And with four months to go, the Board's contribution committee is confident that their goal will be met. I want to personally encourage you to consider a donation to this fund, which will help expand our program's diversity and inclusion initiatives. I also want to thank everyone for supporting this critical development goal of the MPA Alumni Association. If you want to join in these efforts, visit mpa.unc.edu/you-me-333 to learn more and to make your gift.

Another highlight from our previous academic year's fundraising efforts came from the tremendous support we received on April 9 through GiveUNC, the University's annual day of giving. Of the \$67,978 raised by the School of Government on that day, \$42,502 was designated for Carolina MPA scholarships and funds. This is extremely important, as it provides the necessary resources to recruit students and to help them graduate with minimal debt. In fact, the program was able to distribute its largest amount of scholarship dollars to students last year. And this year, we are poised to provide even more.

I want to conclude by encouraging you to join our LinkedIn page with more than 660 alumni members as another way to stay engaged with the MPA program. One of our goals for this coming academic year is to provide you with more information on the MPA program in order to build on the program's fundamental strength—our alumni who carry out the program's mission of becoming public service leaders. As we now turn to the future, I want to thank you for helping us make 2018–19 a very successful academic year!

William C. Rivenbark
Professor and Director

continued from School of Government Hosts..., on page 1

The Largest Event at the School

Although the School hosts numerous courses, programs, and events throughout North Carolina and beyond, PMRC was the largest multi-day program held at the School itself. About 450 conference participants, representing more than 140 institutions and 19 countries came to the School for four days of academic sessions, workshops, meals, and receptions. The Joan H. Gillings Center for Dramatic Art, the UNC School of Law, and the Carolina Inn also provided space to accommodate the crowds.

An Academic Slam Dunk

The School of Government faculty prepared an extraordinary line-up of speakers and a rich platform for this multidisciplinary exchange. Many of

them appeared on panels to present their own work and as gracious moderators and hosts throughout the four days. The receptions and entertainment—including a bluegrass band, an improv comedy performance, and of course, barbecue—also did not disappoint. During the conference, DeHart-Davis was elected vice president of PMRA; she will ultimately become president.

This conference touched each staff division at the School and many people were involved in making it a success. Outgoing PMRA President and University of Kansas Professor Rosemary O'Leary said the

conference was "superb, excellent, first class, intellectually-stimulating, and fun... It was a complete 'slam dunk' in every way. You have set the bar high for those who follow."



PMRC was the largest multi-day event held at the UNC School of Government.

Engaging Local Government Leaders: Your Next Cohort Experience

by Kirsten (Olson) Wyatt '02

When I graduated, I had a diploma and a belief that networks make government stronger. Jean Coble, Gordon Whitaker, and David Ammons expected that each class would work to serve and support each other. Because of this, teamwork was baked into every part of the Carolina MPA experience.

I met my husband Kent Wyatt '02 while working for Tom Lundy '71 on a utility line extension analysis project in Catawba County (always a romance starter....). Fast forward fifteen years, and I'm proud to have co-founded and now serve as the executive director for the Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL) network.

to Oregon while looking for jobs in local government.

I started my local government career in finance and moved into management, while Kent worked in long-range planning and now works in communications. So, we started our own cohort focused on local-level general government service.

We knew we didn't want the group to be overly focused on job title or function. And we wanted to welcome anyone working in public service to participate. On top of that, we believed that local government leadership was changing. There isn't just one path to becoming a city manager, elected leader, or department director anymore.

Copying the Cohort

Although the concept seems simple, it was inaccessible when Kent and I needed it most: a generalized local government organization that we could join and learn from when we moved across the country



(Left to right) Kent Wyatt and Kirsten Wyatt of ELGL with Julie DeVoe and Chuck Lovelace of the Morehead-Cain Foundation.

continued on page 7



To support the MPA program, visit GiveToMPA.unc.edu.

Spring 2019 Graduation

by Jamie Garrett

On Saturday, May 11, 2019 the Carolina MPA program celebrated graduates from Summer and Fall 2018, and Spring 2019. The program also welcomed the 41 most recent Spring 2019 graduates to the Carolina MPA Alumni community.



Faculty member Carl Stenberg and David C. Wright presented Andrew Loeb Shoenig with the Deil S. Wright Award and the Nanette Mengel Communications Award.

Andrew Loeb Shoenig was honored with both the Deil S. Wright Award, recognizing the best portfolio paper, and the Nanette Mengel Communications Award. This is only the second time that a single student has won both awards.

'If you can imagine it, you can make it happen.'

This year's commencement keynote was delivered by Roger Stencil '77, the recently retired manager of the Town of Chapel Hill (2006–2018). Stencil also spent 26 years with the City of Fayetteville, nine of them as city manager. In his speech, Stencil shared some of his 40 years of accumulated wisdom.

The Life of an Infiltrator

Stencil spoke about the idealism of his younger days. He reminded the graduates that they are our nation's future. He informed them of their potential to make a huge impact, no matter where they end up. "You can change the world from where you sit."

'Life is Like a Construction Project'

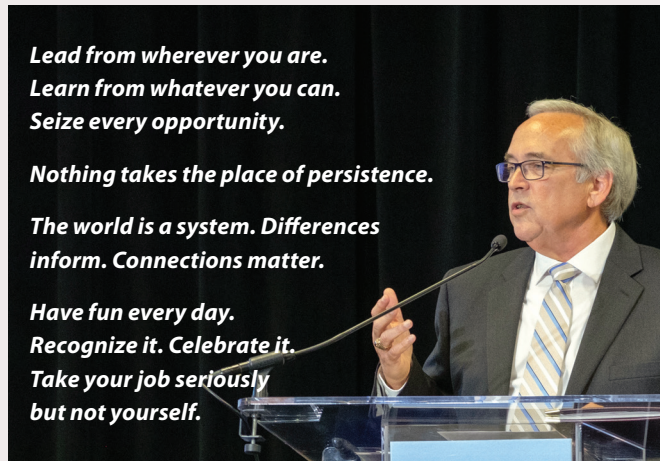
Stencil also told the audience a story of how he recently built a ramp for his mother-in-law's home and drew parallels between that project and life in general. "Life seems like a construction project through which we learn. It was the skills I learned in

*Lead from wherever you are.
Learn from whatever you can.
Seize every opportunity.*

Nothing takes the place of persistence.

The world is a system. Differences inform. Connections matter.

*Have fun every day.
Recognize it. Celebrate it.
Take your job seriously
but not yourself.*



Commencement Speaker Roger Stencil '77

the MPA program that let me build that ramp...If you can imagine it, you can make it happen."

A Calling to Serve

He also encouraged the graduates to remember that the MPA program is simply the beginning. "What you're doing is a calling, a voice in your head that will stay with you forever," Stencil told the graduates. "The calling is real, the challenge is great, but the satisfaction of making a difference is something you can't feel anywhere else."

On the Move

Rebecca Baas '17 is a senior operations analyst at the Center for Child Health and Policy, Rainbow Babies, and Children's Hospital, in Cleveland, OH.

Elizabeth Self Biser '17 is vice president for public affairs at The Recycling Partnership in Raleigh, NC.

Ann Bowen '08 is assistant director of donor relations at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, VA.

Jane Brasier '80 is vice president for Business Development at Clark Nexsen in Raleigh.

Philip Cordero '15 is administrator for the Town of Youngsville, NC.

Max Dickson '19 is assistant professor of military science at the University of Kentucky's U.S. Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps in Lexington.

Lawrence DiRe '99 is the manager of the Town of Cape Charles, VA.

Nicholas Dula '06 is a program development administrator for the City of Raleigh's Housing and Neighborhoods Department.

Benjamin Durant '88 is senior policy advisor for the Office of the President at Guilford College in Greensboro, NC.

Sabrina Willard Ferguson '17 is a special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Los Angeles Division.

Joshua Fernandez '19 is a budget analyst in the Alamance County Finance Department in Graham, NC.

Lena Geraghty '15 is director for innovation and performance management for the City of Portland, ME.

Deborah Goldberg '02 is a management analyst for the Office of Management and Budget of Mecklenburg County, NC.

Anna Hawksworth '18 is a budget analyst for the Town of Chapel Hill.

Laura Hogshead '00 is chief operating officer at the North Carolina Department of Public Safety's Office of Recovery and Resiliency in Raleigh.

Ashley Kazouh '19 is a policy analyst at Public School Forum of North Carolina in Raleigh.

Minal Khan '12 is PFAS program assistant at the UNC-Chapel Hill Gillings School of Public Health Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering.

James Klingler '19 is finance chief at the North Carolina Department of Public Safety's Office of Recovery and Resiliency in Raleigh.

Erin Schwie Langston '03 is executive director of strategic initiatives at Academic Benchmarking Consortium in Chapel Hill.

Henrietta Locklear '02 is vice president at Raftelis Financial Consultants in Memphis, TN.

Claire Long '12 is an employee/labor relations specialist at National Institutes of Health in Research Triangle Park, NC; she also married Nick Haynes.

Peggy Merriss '82 is principal at Merriss Management and Leadership Consulting in Decatur, GA.

Barron Monroe '09 is manager of Anson County, NC.

Tara Nattress '18 is an associate at Fountain Works in Raleigh.

Caley Trujillo Patten '16 is a business analyst for the Gwinnett County Office of Strategy and Performance in GA.

Ebony Perkins '13 is manager of investor and community relations at Self-Help in Durham.

Corey Petersohn '16 is a budget and management analyst for the Town of Holly Springs, NC.

Joseph Pierce '18 is assistant manager of Iredell County, NC.

Timothy Shober '19 is community engagement and outreach coordinator at Latino Community Credit Union in Durham.

Audrey Shore '16 is membership manager at the Carolina Theatre in Durham.

Fagan Stackhouse '71 is director of human resources for the City of Raleigh.

Katherine Thompson '15 is executive director at South Enotah Child Advocacy Center in Cleveland, GA.

Tanya Walton '05 is access and success initiatives manager for the UNC System Office's Division of Strategy and Policy in NC.

Paige Waltz '16 is digital director for the Office of Senator Mitt Romney in Washington, DC.

Kent Wyatt '02 is communications manager for the City of Tigard, OR.

For a complete list of recent alumni updates, visit mpa.unc.edu/news

Congratulations, Graduates

Sadie Alexandra Amonino
Elizabeth Anderson
James Aughenbaugh
Lindsey Victoria Bineau
Kyle Bromir
Roger Aaron Brown
William Carroll
Christopher D. Chavis
Agata Chydzinski
Kim Cox
Jerald Crook

Max Dixon
Joshua Alan Fernandez
Katherine Mae Fiely
Nathalie Floyd
Angela Dawn Gravely-Smith
Kalen Frost Grosskopf
Jim Hemphill
Ashley Kazouh
Elizabeth Michal Kelley
Emily Margaret Langston
Charles Albert Lehmmuller

Jordan Lynsee Marschke
Laura Elizabeth May
Laura Delaney McBryde
Claire LePage Morgan
James Gibbs Owen IV
Joshua Baer Rosenstein
Marissa Saenz
Timothy Autumn Shober
Andrew Loeb Shoenig
Ceara Valesa Smith
Colton Thomas Sobolewski

Emily Rose Stallings
Justin Stirewalt
Kimberly Shea Torres
Matthew Visser
Michael David Welker
Amanda Stafford Workman
Matthew Eaton Wright
Samuel Martin Yeager

TRUE CAROLINA BLUE: TOM BENNETT

On-campus Class of 2020

by Catesby Denison

A native of Concord, North Carolina, Tom Bennett's loyalties to UNC and North Carolina run deep. Both of Bennett's parents are UNC-Chapel Hill graduates. While studying here, he enjoyed experiencing many of the same things his parents did, like going to UNC basketball games and frequenting one of their favorite Franklin Street establishments, Linda's.

Bennett says public service and helping others in North Carolina is also something that runs in the family. He is an Eagle Scout, and he served as a resident mentor during his college dormitory experience. Bennett says that his father always inspired him by getting involved in every community they lived in. Bennett's grandfather also was an active community member who spent most of his career helping encourage growth in the Greenville and East Carolina University area. Bennett said, "We have limited time in this world, so why shouldn't we spend it trying to leave it a little better than we found it and helping our neighbors live their best lives?"

Bennett graduated from J.H. Rose High School in Greenville and attended the University of South Carolina at Columbia. He intended to study international business, but after taking his first political science class, he saw a different path for himself. "The blend of history and contemporary issues fascinated me, especially those dealing with foreign affairs," said Bennett.

In the summer of 2014, Bennett interned for the North Carolina General Assembly, working for Pitt County's then Representative Brian Brown. Bennett researched aspects of the state budget and the North Carolina Community College System.

Bennett came to UNC-Chapel Hill not only because of ties to the State and University, but because of the Carolina MPA's emphasis on local government. Rather than working at the federal or state level, Bennett wanted to pursue a career in local government. He believed coming to UNC-Chapel Hill would help connect him to and prepare him for a career path that would let him help people the most.

"They are some of the best and smartest people I've ever met. To be a part of that group is something special."

Bennett's favorite part of the program is finding so many close friends within his cohort. "They are some of the best and smartest people I've ever met. To be a part of that group is something special."

His favorite courses included faculty member Willow Jacobson's Organizational Theory and Chuck Szypszak's Law for Public Administration. "The practical part of analyzing an organization outside of the program was real experience and showed what we were learning in real-time."



This summer Bennett completed his Professional Work Experience with the Town of Matthews, North Carolina. He expressed his excitement to work with Matthews Town Manager and fellow alumnus Hazen Blodgett '88. He spent the summer helping to implement the Town's strategic plan. Much of his work has focused on, "engaging the organization as a whole to make sure we get as much input we can to increase buy-in to the plan."

Bennett says this experience will be invaluable in helping him pursue a career in local government management. While he does not know exactly what he wants to do after graduation, he looks forward to serving the people of North Carolina. "I know the MPA program has equipped me with the tools to be a team player for whatever municipality I serve and to succeed while doing it."

continued from Engaging Local Government Leaders..., on page 3

Informed by the Carolina MPA cohort experience, we gathered 16 people in different roles from cities across the Portland region for lunch. Everyone had so much fun that we agreed to meet up the next month, and then the month after that.

Soon we started bringing in guest speakers to share what they were working on and how it affected cities, counties, and districts. Then we added a website and social media to share what we were learning. We called ourselves ELGL—the Engaging Local Government Leaders network.

About ELGL

Today, ELGL has 4,800 members in every state and six countries. Our mission is to engage the brightest minds in local government. We do this with a daily flow of blog posts and weekly GovLove podcast content. We also host exciting events like City Hall Selfie Day, Supper Clubs, and conferences. And all of these focus on increasing diversity and inclusion in local government and finding the joy in public service.

We also spend our time on substantive topics like collecting data for the Diversity Dashboard (DiversityDashboard.org), a first-of-its-kind live database of the demographics of local government leaders nationwide.

We recognize outstanding local government leaders, places, and employers via our awards program. In this spring's #ELGLKnope recognition of the top parks in local government, Matt Roylance '97 shepherded Garner's parks to the Elite Eight, showcasing this North Carolina town's leadership and infrastructure investment.

Our work is meaningful and fun. Anyone is welcome to join—our members are students, managers, police officers, librarians, accountants, civic tech startup founders, innovation directors, planners, and everyone in between. Why? Because we know that local government is stronger when we work together and welcome everyone to the ELGL table.

Bringing #ELGL19 to Durham

In May 2019, ELGL brought our annual conference to Durham, North Carolina, the perfect spot for a national local government conference. Not only does the city boast national accolades for programs like Innovate Durham and for improving opportunities for justice involved residents, but it also has a consistent track record of hiring and promoting the brightest minds in local government. Plus, Durham and the Triangle region have deep networks of Carolina MPA students and alumni who are active ELGL members.

ELGL Board Member Ben Kittelson led the organizing effort for #ELGL19. His team included Josh Edwards '05, Sarah Hazel '14, Caley Patten '16, Ellis Johnson '18, and Rafael Baptista '15. They curated a speaker lineup that included Eric Marsh '17 as master of ceremonies and Monica Chaparro '05, plus a keynote panel with Greensboro Mayor Nancy Vaughan and Carrboro Mayor Lydia Lavelle. The attendee list included a who's who of Carolina MPA local government leaders from across the country.

#ELGL19 was made even more special thanks to a partnership with the Carolina MPA "Happy Hour Hub" program which brought local alumni to the #ELGL19 social event at Hi-Wire Brewing in Durham.

Continuing Connections

ELGL continues to build our relationship with the Carolina MPA program. And we're proud of our relationships with 20 students (now 12 alumni and eight rising second year students). Like Kent and I did so many years ago, they are exploring issues of interest in local government in that same first-year consulting class. Students have worked on the Diversity Dashboard, researched paid family leave, studied trends in HR recruitment, and reviewed parks and recreation management.

Without a doubt, we are proud to support the work of Carolina MPA faculty. Recently, we interviewed faculty members Leisha Dehart-Davis and Kim Nelson for GovLove on their "Near the Top" research about women and people of color in local government leadership. We're also anxiously awaiting publication of David Ammons' newest performance-measurement publication and hope to host an #ELGLBookClub discussion about it. John Stephens and ELGL share a love and social media following for civic data and open source government and found shared connections at the Code for America Summit in Oakland, California. And the MPA program continues to be an amazing advocate for ELGL, enrolling current students in the organization as part of the School of Government's "All-In" membership level.

If you missed #ELGL19 in Durham, we've already booked #ELGL20 scheduled for May 13–15, 2020 in Portland, Oregon.

Learn more at ELGL.org/membership. Listen to the GovLove podcast at elgl.org/govlove.



**SCHOOL OF
GOVERNMENT**

**THE UNIVERSITY
OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT CHAPEL HILL**

Knapp-Sanders Building
Campus Box 3330
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3330

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit 177
Chapel Hill, NC

Change Service Requested

IMPACT

Upcoming Events

Visit mpa.unc.edu/alumni-events for full details and to register

HAPPY HOUR HUB

SEPT. 24 | 5:30–8 P.M.

City Tap House Penn Quarter
901 9th St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

CAROLINA MPA FALL RECEPTION

OCT. 4 | 5–7:30 P.M.

UNC School of Government

Join alumni, students, faculty, and staff for appetizers, drinks, and conversation. The reception coincides with the Carolina MPA's annual immersion course.

HAPPY HOUR HUB

RESCHEDULED!

OCT. 30 | 5:30–8 P.M.

Pitt Street Brewing Company
630 S. Pitt St., Greenville, NC 27834

20190417

Visit our website
mpa.unc.edu



@UNCMPA
@MPAatUNC



CarolinaMPA
MPAatUNC



Carolina MPA Alumni



Make a gift online
GiveToMPA.unc.edu