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# MPA Newsletter

Summer 2017

## Message from the Department Head

In most lines of work, success is generally measured by what we accomplished. When it comes to higher education, success is determined by a different set of standards. Our success is not measured by our accomplishments, but rather by the achievements of our students and alumni. Using this standard, the WKU MPA program has been an unequivocal success. Our graduates have made and continue to make a difference locally, regionally, and in many cases nationally. We are proud of our students and alumni and look forward to seeing their continued contributions and achievements. At the same time, we continue to look for ways to improve the program to better serve our students and public. Under the leadership of Professors Boden, Vaughan, and Gordon the program continues to evolve to meet the demands for a new generation of public administrators.

As a Department, we are excited to launch our JUMP program that will allow talented undergraduates to get a head start on earning their MPA degree. We are also in the process of updating our curriculum to help our students better meet the challenges of public administration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.



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## MPA Student Award Winners



Dr. Shannon Vaughan, Dr. Dan Boden, Nicole Todd, Ashleigh Barker, Dr. Victoria Gordon

On April 14, 2017 the Political Science Department held its annual Awards Banquet to honor undergraduate and graduate student achievements. The MPA program was proud to honor Ashleigh N. Barker as the 2017 Outstanding Graduate Student in Public Administration. Additionally, the program recognized Kennedy P. Prather and Nicole A. Todd with the Spirit Makes the Master Award. We look forward to hearing about the future successes of all three of these alumni.

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## Study Away to Washington, DC

In May, Dr. Dan Boden and Dr. Jeff Budziak took 10 students to Washington, DC for a Study Away experience focused on issues related to public-private partnerships. As part of the trip, students met with Ms. Patricia Bartlett, the Acting Assistant Secretary for Education and Access for the Smithsonian Institution, to discuss among other things the creation and administration of the new National Museum of African American History and Culture. For several student it was their first opportunity to visit our nation's Capitol.



Ms. Patricia Bartlett, Heenam Choi, Blake Nantz, Dr. Dan Boden, Jerrod Barks, Shelby Miles, Rachel Pearson, Sydni Saalwaechter, Saeed Alshaer, Chia-Yuh Lin, Dylan Ward, and Zach Runyon

## MPA Student News

In March, MPA students Ashleigh Barker and Gaines Brown accompanied Dr. Saundra Ardrey to the National Conference of Black Studies held in Houston, TX. This annual conference attracts participants who are teaching, conducting research and performing in the African diaspora. It is the perfect opportunity for young African American scholars to network and present their research and receive feedback from others in the discipline. Gaines Brown, a second year MPA student presented his research at the conference and was “inspired” by the opportunity to attend the event. Following his presentation, Dr. Ardrey introduced Gaines to Dr. Mulana Karenga, Professor and Chair of the Department of Africana Studies at California State University, Long Beach and founder of the African American tradition, Kwanzaa. Gaines said, “I am extremely grateful for this experience at this conference as it showed me what all is possible when you work diligently towards your purpose.”



Dr. Mulana Karenga and Gaines Brown at National Conference of Black Studies in Houston, TX



Ashleigh Barker and Nicole Todd at the 2017 NASPAA-Batten Student Simulation Competition in Indianapolis, IN

Once again, the WKU MPA program participated in the NASPAA-Batten Student Simulation Competition, held on February 25, 2017. Nearly 400 graduate students from universities around the world converged on competition sites in eight locations – Maastricht, New York City, Washington D.C., Indianapolis, Bogotá, Phoenix, Seattle, and Beijing – for a one-day competition involving a computer simulation challenge to advance global food security. We are thrilled that two of our MPA students (now new alumni) participated in the competition at the Indianapolis site this year. Ashleigh Barker, who took classes on the Bowling

Green campus, and Nicole Todd, who took classes on our extended campus at Ft. Knox, represented us well. They both indicated it was an enjoyable and valuable experience. More information on the competition is available at <https://studentcompetition.naspaa.org>.



## Spring and Summer 2017 Graduates



**From left:** Brandon White, Ashleigh Barker, Dr. Shannon Vaughan, Jennifer Smith, Deanna Jenkins, Shelby Miles, Mohammed Alshamsi, Dr. Dan Boden, Batool Alsaghah

### Spring 2017

Mohammed M. Alshamsi  
Ashleigh N. Baker  
Pamela J. Buchanan  
Deanna M. Jenkins  
Nicole A. Todd

### Summer 2017

Batool M. Alsaghah  
Shelby L. Miles  
Jennifer B. Smith  
Brandon N. White

***Congratulations, Graduates!***

## NASPAA Notes

NASPAA has numerous resources available through their website [www.naspaa.org](http://www.naspaa.org). In this issue, we'd like to highlight their MPA/MPP Alumni Profiles, accessible at (<http://www.naspaa.org/alumni>). Their profiles illustrate the vast array of career opportunities available to those with master's degrees in public administration (MPA) or public policy (MPP). Distinguished alumni who are highlighted include individuals who have held positions as U.S. cabinet secretary, FCC chairman, director of the CIA, and executive director of UNICEF. Recent MPA/MPP graduates include city and county management professionals (which is to be expected), a research fellow with a large private foundation (which is not *unexpected*), and the Head of Community Development at Google (which might be surprising to some). These positions highlight the increased blurring of the lines between sectors, which present numerous and exciting career options for those with formal training in public administration.



## JUMP MPA

In April 2017 the Master of Public Administration program was approved to offer a Joint Undergraduate-Masters Program (JUMP). The JUMP offers highly qualified and motivated students the opportunity to complete a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in an accelerated time frame.

The JUMP allows undergraduate students to take up to 18 hours of graduate courses and apply up to 12 credits toward both their undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Christian M. Howard, a Political Science major from Bowling Green, Kentucky, was the first student to take advantage of the JUMP MPA. Christian said he was attracted to the MPA JUMP because it fit with his career goals of working with a lobbying firm or government agency upon graduation. When asked about the MPA JUMP he said, "I was thrilled to hear that Western was offering this JUMP Program since it would allow me to go and start earning credits towards a post-graduate degree while I was still working through my undergraduate courses."

As the director of the MPA program, Dr. Boden is excited that the JUMP offers an additional avenue for students to pursue the MPA degree at WKU. He looks forward to seeing the number of JUMP students increase and to continued success of our MPA students and alumni.

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## Alumni News

The MPA program is pleased to announce that Fall 2017 graduate, Kamla Jones, has been hired as a Compliance Officer with Louisville Metro Government. As an MPA student, Kamla interned for the City of Bowling Green earning high praise from her internship supervisor.

Shelby Miles, a Summer 2017 graduate, recently accepted a position as a Financial Institutions Examiner I for the Commonwealth of Kentucky's Department of Financial Institutions. Shelby came to the MPA program with an interest in public budgeting and finance.

Congratulations to both Kamla and Shelby and good luck in your new positions!

The MPA Program would like to hear from you. Please email Dr. Boden and tell him your news— both personal and professional. Email Dr. Boden at [daniel.boden@wku.edu](mailto:daniel.boden@wku.edu) or [mpa@wku.edu](mailto:mpa@wku.edu) or call him at 270-745-6357.



## Stay Connected with WKU's Department of Political Science

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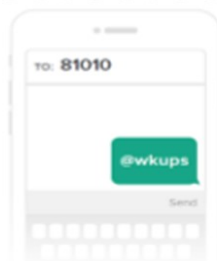
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