

# PUBLIC EYE MPA NEWSLETTER

Winter 2009

## Sustainability and TESC MPA

At first blush, one might think the topic of sustainability is better situated in the Master of Environmental Studies (MES) program at Evergreen, not in the MPA. Thankfully, this is not the case. As more public organizations adopt sustainability as strategic and operational initiatives, administrators from all sectors are beginning to look to sustainability as something bigger than green buying principles or reducing carbon footprints. Sustainability is about radically changing the way humans relate to each other and to the Earth and, by extension, radically changing the ways we govern. Sustainability helps us make long-needed progress toward transformative change away from industrial models of organizing and governing and toward models that produce greater inclusiveness, democracy and social justice. Indeed, because sustainability can bridge differences in ideology and political leanings, sustainability reform models have a greater potential to actually affect long term organizational and social change than reform models of the recent past. As such, sustainability can be a portal for transformational public service.

The Evergreen MPA program is practicing transformational public service through sustainability in a number of ways:

**Second year MPA student**, Scott Morgan, was awarded a Graduate Fellowship with the Evergreen State College Office of Sustainability in November, 2008. As Sustainability Coordinator, Scott assists TESC Sustainability Director John Pumilio (a MES alumni) in coordinating and channeling the enormous interest in sustainability within the Evergreen community into long-term collaborations both within the College and within our greater local and world communities. The process of developing sustainable, collaborative organizations particularly intrigues Scott. The Evergreen State College has received numerous state and national accolades and recognition for our work and accomplishments in sustainability. The Sierra Club, the National Wildlife Federation, the Princeton Review, and the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) have all recognized Evergreen as one of the top 'green' colleges in the country. The EPA, Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire, and the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce have also honored Evergreen for our sustainability practices.

MPA Adjunct Faculty Member, Michael Mucha, and MPA student, Amy Buckler, are working hard to promote sustainable management strategies and practices with the City of Olympia. Michael's day job is Director of Public Works for the City and Amy is a Management Intern. Michael, who teaches a short course for MPA entitled Sustainable Leadership and Decision Making, has helped lead the City of Olympia to national and international renown for their work on sustainability.

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In the early 1990s, a sustainability vision for the City of Olympia was created by a citizen task force. In 2005, the City Council adopted the goal of putting sustainability into action as one of its important long-term priorities and the City's administration had to put sustainability into action. Under Michael's leadership, decision makers recognized that sustainable action starts with balanced decision making and that the City needed a tool to help make sustainable and balanced decisions. Michael teamed up with students from an Evergreen undergraduate class co-taught by MPA Director, Cheryl Simrell King, and MES Faculty Member, Rob Knapp to create the decision-making tool, the Sustainability Action Map (SAM). SAM is widely used in the City of Olympia and also in other cities and counties across the world (read more about SAM in Amy Buckler's recent online feature article: <http://www.citiesgogreen.com/issues/october-2008/features/red-light-green-light>).

**In the Summer of 2007**, the City of Olympia and the City of Montpelier, Vermont adopted a joint resolution kicking off a Sustainable Capital City Challenge. The objective of the challenge is for the two communities to support each other in becoming the most sustainable capital Cities in the nation. The two cities will share ideas, report on progress and celebrate milestones together and challenge their communities to work together to build a sustainable future. Michael and Amy are leading the Capital City Challenge effort – watch for more news about this at the City's website and in local newspapers.



**Michael Mucha** (City of Olympia and MPA Adjunct Faculty) and **Gwen Hall-smith** (City of Montpelier and coauthor of Taking Action for Sustainability: The EarthCAT Guide to Community Development) challenging each other in Montpelier, VT

**In Spring, 2009** MPA Director, Cheryl Simrell King, and MES Faculty Member, Rob Knapp, are reprising their successful course, Public Works: Democracy and Sustainability, as a MPA/MES jointly sponsored elective.

Sustainability is not a new idea, but organizational and community wide emphasis upon sustainability is still in the formative stages. It's an exciting area of work, at many different levels.

Public Administrators, in particular, have the opportunity to create and support new levels of engagement and collaboration within their organizations and communities. In these days of frequent change, with so many dark clouds and uncertainties in our future, sustainability offers a bright spot of hope for positive change. The MPA program is proud to be involved in cutting edge projects and work designed to bring about sustainable positive change and transformation.

## MPA-Welcomes new Staff

**Welcome Janet (Jan) Hays**, the new MPA Office Assistant. Most recently, Jan administered a high school counseling office in Bellevue. Jan can be reached at 360.867. 5939 or [haysj@evergreen.edu](mailto:haysj@evergreen.edu).

**Welcome to Magdalene (Maggie) McCarty**, the new MPA Assistant Director, Tribal. Maggie is an alumna of the Tribal MPA concentration, as well as an alumnus of the Evergreen Undergraduate Reservation Based Program. She previously served as the Director of Human Resources for the Makah Nation. Maggie can be reached at [mccartym@evergreen.edu](mailto:mccartym@evergreen.edu) or 360.867.6202.

## MPA-In the News

### In Memoriam

Ellie Reynolds, MPA class of 91-93, d. Wednesday October 1, 2008 in Seattle, Washington.

**Congratulations** to MPA student Jon Clontz who received the 2008 Governor's Distinguished Managers Award for his work with the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Congratulations** to MPA Director Cheryl Simrell King on her 2008 Public Administration Educator of the Year award from the Evergreen Chapter of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA).

**Congratulations** to MPA alumna Melissa Palmer and MPA alumna Serah Stetson. Both were selected as Budget Fellows for the Office of Program Research, a nonpartisan, legislative staff office that provides research, legal, and administrative services to Washington's House of Representatives committees. Melissa was selected as a fellow and then was immediately hired into a permanent position, creating the opening for Serah to be selected as a fellow. These fellowships are highly competitive and Melissa's and Serah's accomplishment speak highly of them and of the program.

### News on recent graduates/job changes

- Nyevea Bembry - recently appointed as the Coordinator of Outreach to Underrepresented Minority Students at UW Tacoma (she did her Capstone project on this topic).
- Arlen Harris - recently appointed as Legislative Liaison for the Washington State Lottery.



- Kelly McDonald - recently promoted to Capital Campaign Manager with YWCA Pierce County
- Teresa Mosqueda - recently appointed to a Lobbyist position for the Children's Alliance, An advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health, safety, and economic well being of children in Washington state.
- Amanda Froemsdorf - recently promoted to Program Manager with Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Robert McHaney - recently hired with a transportation planning company in Houston, TX.
- Dae Shogren - recently hired with Community Youth Services (CYS) as their new Independent Living Skills Program Coordinator
- Amy Buckler - recently hired to the City of Olympia's Department of Community Planning & Development (after a WCMA internship with the City).

We plan to begin to more closely track MPA alumni, particularly with regard to job changes.

Expect to hear soon from Assistant MPA Director, Randee Gibbons (gibbonsr@evergreen.edu).

Have news to share? Send to MPA Director Cheryl Simrell King, kingcs@evergreen.edu

## Community Based Learning

This year the Center for Community-Based Learning and Action (CCBLA) offers more pathways to community involvement. Our aim is comprehensive engagement with the community through curricular and co-curricular opportunities.

Many grassroots and institutional partners are looking for support from contract students and interns. At the heart of our mission are the five foci of an Evergreen education; interdisciplinary learning, learning across significant differences, personal engagement with learning, linking theory to practice, and collaborative learning.

Our center supports students looking for capstone ideas or second year projects with community organizations. We also work with sites requesting student interns. If you are an MPA Alumni and are seeking current MPA students for your organizational work, let us know. The center is a great resource for volunteer opportunities; we can help find that perfect placement. We work with faculty to build community based learning into the curriculum through Fellowships for community-faculty collaborations. As a resource center, we can help you share your research and projects with others.

In the past, many Evergreen MPA students have worked with CCBLA on community initiatives and social justice issues. Some of these include food security, poverty policy, grassroots organizing, immigration, and non-profit management and start-up. This community work has evolved into careers for MPA alums who are working for the public good. The impacts of the work are tangible and far-reaching.

Stop by Seminar 2 E 2125, CCBLA is your resource for campus community partnership and engaged learning! EMAIL: ccbla@evergreen.edu

## MPA Student Profile



Hasson Guyo

Hassan was born and raised on a small cattle farm in Northern Kenya. Since he was a little boy, his passion and commitment for helping others, especially women and children in his community, has been his passion. Hassan has seven brothers and five sisters. His mother raised them alone because his father passed away when he was 9 years old. Hassan has a strong will, hope and determination - he has struggled to put himself through college, working full time and providing for his 7 children.

Hassan understands that we are all on a journey towards becoming a complete person. He also realizes that along the way, on the journey, we all reach milestones. Last year, he reached a very important milestone - he obtained his bachelor degree at Evergreen. He is on his way to reaching another very important milestone - obtaining a Masters in Public Administration.

Hassan is no longer that little boy that grew up herding goats in the jungles of Kenya. Now, he has learned a new language, culture and lifestyle, which he appreciates. However, he continues with his mission to give back to his community and to make a difference in the world. He hopes to go back to Kenya and apply all that he has learned to make social change.

Hassan recognizes that no one is exempt from turmoil in life. However, he can honestly admit that he is thankful for the adversities and challenges that life brought him. They have strengthened his character. He did not let them stop him from pursuing his vision, dreams and hopes. It was due to his own life experiences that led to the creation of Village Hope Association

Village Hope Association is a community based nonprofit organization that promotes education to young girls and empowers women. It also will provide access to health care in his native rural village in Kenya. Its mission is to bring education and basic health care to the world's poorest communities.

## Walking our Talk: First Year Students Work on Local Hunger Issues

The vision of the Evergreen MPA program is, to quote Mohandes Gandhi, to “be the change you wish to see in the world.” During the 2007-08 academic year we decided to try something new to fulfill the program vision. As part of their first year core coursework, MPA students in the General cohort typically work in small teams on projects of their choosing. For the first time, students and faculty worked together on one issue, with one client organization. First year General cohort students and faculty partnered with one organization, the Hunger Free Thurston County Coalition (HFTC), to provide data to help shape their strategic planning process.

HFTC’s mission is to end hunger in Thurston County by 2012. HFTC is a coalition of local organizations whose missions include complementary strategies for responding to hunger: the Thurston County Food Bank, Garden-Raised Bounty (GRuB), Left-Foot Organics and the Gleaners Coalition, with Temple Beth Hatfiloh as an advisor and partner. This coalition was originally formed to secure a 3-year Community Food Project grant from the US Department of Agriculture to support local food security initiatives such as community garden construction and farm-based youth employment opportunity expansion.

During the Fall quarter of 2007 students worked in teams to collect information from constituents and stakeholders via interviews to “map” hunger and responses to hunger in Thurston County. In Winter quarter, students developed their project management skills and used the “map” to design a

local hunger data gathering strategy. The goal of this strategy was to find the most effective ways ask both rural and urban members of the greater community important questions about hunger, such as: is hunger a relevant issue in our community; what is working now; what projects will help alleviate hunger and malnutrition locally; and what are you willing to do to end hunger? The year culminated in the Spring Quarter with “the Days of Interaction,” during which students organized and facilitated a variety of data gathering efforts, including listening booths at Arts Walk, on-line surveys, and rural outreach in targeted locations. At the end of Spring the students provided HFTC with the results of their work to use as a foundation for future planning. HFTC is currently using the data provided by MPA to continue with their strategic planning process and determine how to fulfill their noteworthy mission.

(Many thanks to the “Blue’s News” column in the May 2008 GRUB Newsletter for providing content for this article.)

Written by, Randee Gibbons, Assistant Director MPA

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