MPA Director’s Note

Alumni Newsletter

May 2020

Greetings Friends of the Evergreen MPA Program,

We are coming to the close of the academic year in a time that will surely be one of the most noteworthy in our lives. The Covid-19 pandemic has fundamentally shifted how we work, relax, and relate to each other. As a public administration professor, though, one thing that stands out to me has been the public spirited nature with which so many of us have embraced these changes and the accompanying challenges in our lives. The public and personal costs of social distancing are daunting and we may pay those costs for a long time.

Yet we all bear these costs in recognition that we are not just protecting ourselves but protecting others. When we recognized that we had the health care skill and technology but not the capacity to save people affected by Covid-19, we have together taken the steps needed to keep our communities within that capacity so as many people could survive as our skill and technology allows. On behalf of Evergreen’s MPA program, I thank all of our alumni, students, and their families who are mobilizing our efforts to care for each other and to continue vital public services during the pandemic. Recognizing our collective accomplishment in this heartens me and reminds us all what we can accomplish as public administration professionals when faced with a crisis.

It is important to remember that while many of us are being tested we also have much to celebrate from the previous year. The Evergreen MPA program has taught in remote format for all its courses for the spring quarter. Our faculty, staff, and students had only two short weeks to make this transition happen and I am extraordinarily proud of the resilience we have all demonstrated in making the quarter a success. We are “still muddling, not yet through” with changes that are not at all incremental. But if we have not yet optimized the remote learning experience, we have at least satisficed and have a basis for making improvements as we move into summer and next academic year.

We are also proud to report that we are moving forward with our first-ever [virtual MPA hooding ceremony](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/graduation) to honor the Spring 2020 graduating class. This spring we wished long-time Evergreen MPA faculty Cheryl Simrell King well on her [retirement](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/retirement-time-covid-19-mpa-faculty-cheryl-simrell-king-retires-after-20-years) and celebrate her new status as Faculty Emerita at Evergreen. We have also said farewell to MPA Assistant Director Anna Rhoads in her new position with the Washington Health Benefit Exchange, and welcomed soon-to-be MPA graduate [Marcia Zitzelman](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/mpa-welcomes-marcia-zitzelman-our-new-interim-assistant-director-pnapp-olympia-campus) as the new MPA Assistant Director for the Olympia PNAPP program. And our faculty continue to make a difference not only to our students, but in public administration as a field of study, with new articles by [Lucky Anguelov](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/two-peer-reviewed-journal-articles-published-mpa-faculty-lucky-anguelov) and [Meghan Doughty](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/mpa-faculty-meghan-doughty-published-oxford-university-press-hostages-compliance-towards), new books by [Eric Trevan](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/mpa-faculty-eric-s-trevan-phd-has-finished-his-recent-book) and Doreen Swetkis, and public lectures by [Cali Ellis](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/dr-cali-ellis-lectures-global-leadership) and [myself](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/mpa-director-mike-craw-speaks-university-guadalajara). And we join with you in celebrating the accomplishments of MPA alumni and students this year, including [Mary Wahpat](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/student-spotlight-mary-wahpat-named-associate-judge-yakama-nation) (new Associate Judge for the Yakama Nation), [Jennica Machado](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/alumni-spotlight-jennica-machado-mpa%E2%80%9917-thurston-county%E2%80%99s-economic-development-manager) (Thurston County’s new economic development director), and [Christine Bezanson](https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/post/alumni-spotlight-gov-inslee-names-christine-bezanson-mpa14-director-results-washington) (new director of Results Washington).

Perhaps most of all, we want to honor and recognize our current MPA students, who are both learning in the classroom and learning in their lives about public service during a pandemic. MPA Student Ambassador Lindsey Fujimoto contributes the following infographic describing the Fall 2019 MPA cohort

[INSERT INFOGRAPHIC HERE OR PROVIDE A LINK TO THE WORD “INFOGRAPHIC” ABOVE]

These data points tell us that Evergreen’s MPA program continues to play a leading role in shaping state, local, and tribal governments in Washington to become truly representative of the people we serve. We are proud to call all of you our alumni and continue to support you as you fulfill a mission to “be the change.”