

# WE'RE USF'S SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS...

## AND WE'RE STILL ON THE MOVE!

- Thanks to many of you, we **improved our ranking in the *U.S. News & World Report's*** 2019 survey of the best Schools of Public Affairs, moving from 135 (tied with over a dozen other programs) all the way up to 123. While we're still not where we want to be, we're definitely on the right trajectory, and we appreciate all of our colleagues who have recognized the progress that we've made.
- And thanks to the recruiting efforts of our faculty, we **increased enrollments by an average of over 100%** in our graduate and undergraduate programs, adding over two-dozen new MPA and MURP students this Fall 2019 term and nearly doubling the size of our undergraduate population. This is a major achievement after several years of flat or declining enrollments. In fact, our School achieved the **largest overall improvement in enrollment** in USF's College of Arts and Sciences (the University's largest), the only one with a triple digit percentage increase!
- In addition, our MURP program was granted candidacy status for its initial accreditation by the ***Planning Accreditation Board***, with a PAB site visit and final decision due next year. Barely ten years old, the MURP program has grown by leaps and bounds, and we met the minimum number of graduates to qualify for this coveted status in record time. We're optimistic, and with last year's clean bill of health (and six more years of accreditation) for our MPA program from ***NASPAA***, all of our programs will meet the highest of academic and professional standards.

## WE'VE ADDED EVEN MORE UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES

- We unveiled an exciting new **undergraduate program in *Public Service and Leadership*** designed to appeal to students who want to give back to their cities, the community, and our country...and take advantage of thousands of job openings in the state's public, non-profit, and private sectors; with two courses approved by the state of Florida as meeting its mandatory General Education requirements in Ethical Reasoning and Community Engagement (ERCE), we're already experiencing tremendous student interest.
- As part of USF's campus consolidation, we've expanded our undergraduate program to **USF Sarasota-Manatee**, adapting and delivering the first of what we hope will be many courses in *Public Service and Leadership*; the inaugural course is scheduled for the Spring 2020 semester and, as with our Tampa campus offerings, it will satisfy Florida's General Education requirement for coursework in ERCE as well.

- In addition, we developed and delivered a number of **new graduate course offerings** in Public Administration and Urban Planning including: *Affordable Housing, Disaster Resilient Community, Emergency Management, International Development and Foreign Aid* (which reached its enrollment capacity in just two weeks), *Leadership in Public and Nonprofit Sectors, Planning and Public Finance, Procurement and Strategic Sourcing, Resilient Communities, and Transportation and Land Use*. We're also ensuring that all of these courses meet the state's online requirements, so that they can be offered nationally and internationally.
- To that end, we're working with USF World and Innovative Education to develop and deliver a **graduate certificate in International Public Management**; an online program requiring a minimum of four courses (two core and two electives). The program—which we hope to launch next year—is designed for international professionals who are interested in helping their home governments improve. This certificate will complement our other programs, including graduate certificates in: *Community Development; Data Science for Public Administration; Leadership for Coastal Resiliency Planning; Management of Non-Governmental and Non-Profit Organizations; and Public Management* (for domestic students).
- Finally, we developed and are conducting a **remote classroom pilot** with the University Partnership Center at St. Petersburg College to provide synchronous learning for our distance learning students so they can complete those MPA classes that require live peer-to-peer and student-to-instructor interaction; the pilot is designed to complement our online course offerings and if successful (initial evaluations are encouraging), we'll be able to deliver our classroom curriculum to new students in the Pinellas County area and throughout our region.

## WE'RE ALSO DELIVERING EXCITING NEW PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

- With a generous grant from the Florida Center for Cybersecurity (a.k.a. Cyber Florida), we partnered with the Florida League of Cities (FLC) and the Florida City and County Management Association (FCCMA) to design and administer the first **comprehensive survey of the cybersecurity readiness** of the state's cities and counties; the results underscore the need for more state support for our beleaguered cities and counties, and we're working with FLC and FCCMA to develop a legislative proposal in that regard.
- We also partnered with Cyber Florida, FLC, FCCMA, and the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) to design and deliver a series of day-long **workshops on Cybersecurity for Local Government Leaders**; designed to respond to the rash of cyber-attacks perpetrated on the state's cities and counties, the sessions feature an intense **cybersecurity war game** designed by our School, specifically for local elected officials and city and county managers.
- In addition, with the generous in-kind support of the Nielsen Company's local leadership team and our sister Department of Communications, we restarted the University's vaunted **Sunshine State Survey**; intended to annually gather the views of Florida's citizens on a host of public policy issues, the survey is one of the most influential sources of input for public officials and policy-makers.

- Finally, our School joined forces with USF's Muma College of Business to design and deliver a series of highly successful (and intense!) two- and four-day **professional development programs on *Cybersecurity for Executives*** that included senior leaders from a number of government agencies and jurisdictions (such as U.S. Central Command, Hillsborough County, and the Tampa Aviation and Port Authorities), as well as a host of private companies.

## WE'RE FOSTERING A GROWING FACULTY AND STUDENT LEARNING COMMUNITY

- Our faculty continues to contribute to **cutting-edge research**, publishing over a dozen articles in various refereed journals, including the *American Review of Public Administration*; *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*; *Public Administration Quarterly*; *Public Management Review*; and *Transportation Research*. They also contributed chapters to a number of books, including in *Community Livability* (Routledge); *Global Climate Change and Human Health: From Science to Practice* (Wiley); *Rebuilding Lives Post-Disaster* (Oxford University Press); and *Zoning: A Guide for 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Planning* (Routledge).\*
- This past year we welcomed **two new faculty members**: Dr. Peng Chen (Ph.D. in Planning from the University of Washington) a transportation expert who has joined our MURP program, and Dr. Gyeo Reh Lee (Ph.D. in Public Administration from Indiana University Bloomington) who has a joint appointment in our MPA program and USF's Department of Sociology.
- In addition, **two of our faculty members were awarded tenure** and promoted to Associate Professor: Dr. Evangeline Linkous (Ph.D. in Planning from the University of Pennsylvania) is now an Associate Professor in our MURP program, and Dr. Stephen Neely (Ph.D. in Public Administration from North Carolina State University) is now an Associate Professor in our MPA program.
- Thanks to the generosity of our School's many supporters, we've established **two new scholarships**—the *Mark Bentley APA Sun Coast Section Scholarship* for our MURP students (established by a renowned local attorney in his own name), and the *Public Service Scholarship* for aspiring public servants in our newly redesigned undergraduate program (established by the School Director Dr. Ron Sanders)—and significantly **increased funding for our two existing scholarships**: one established by recently-deceased Professor Emeritus Dr. Jamil Jreisat and the other in honor of the late Professor Dr. Joan Pynes.
- We also hosted our first-ever **student awards and recognition luncheon** that highlighted the achievements of our MPA and MURP students, including scholarship winners and honor society inductees—and featured a panel of area public officials...including the administrator of one of our area's largest counties, the city manager of one of our largest cities, one of our area's most prominent non-profit leaders, and the executive director of our area's planning commission (two of whom are graduates of our MPA program).

\*A complete listing of faculty publications can be found as an appendix on pages 7-8. All publications are from 2019-20 unless otherwise indicated.

- Finally, in collaboration with the *American Society for Public Administration's Suncoast Chapter*, we've established the **USF ASPA Student Chapter** under its auspices; it joins our other student organizations—including the **USF ICMA Student Chapter**, the **Student Planning Organization** under the auspices of the *APA Florida Chapter Sun Coast Section*, and the **Student Advocates for Progressive Planning** organization—in providing networking and professional development outside the classroom, and the new group is already planning podcasts and a Public Service Career Fair for the Spring 2020 term.

## WE'VE EXPANDED EXPERIENTIAL, HANDS-ON LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Our MPA Capstone students continue to support a number of high-profile initiatives undertaken by Hillsborough County, including the area's **Uptown Innovation District**, a multi-year/multimillion-dollar project being championed by the County Administrator Mike Merrill, newly-elected City of Tampa Mayor Jane Castor, and (because the Innovation District is contiguous to USF) the University's newest President, Dr. Steven Currall.
- A team of MURP students is also conducting a **study of the New Tampa community** (adjacent to USF) for Tampa Mayor Jane Castor; the student research team (which has partnered with our MPA Research Methods class to also develop and administer a community survey), has facilitated a number of community meetings and stakeholder interviews and will present their findings and recommendations to the Mayor early next year.
- In addition to the Uptown Innovation District, our students also continue to support a number of high-profile projects undertaken by area jurisdictions like Hillsborough County, the City of Tampa, and the local James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital; subjects include: **affordable housing; children's services pilot foster care program; emergency management post-event recovery protocols**; fiscal sustainability; and performance metrics including an online dashboard for citizens.
- To increase the number of experiential learning opportunities available to our students, we formalized strategic **partnerships with a number of key local agencies and government jurisdictions**, signing MOUs with Hillsborough and Pinellas County, the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, and the City of Largo, with several others still pending. The MOUs provide for more regularized student internship opportunities, student-led classroom projects, and community-engaged research.
- Associate Professor Dr. Elizabeth Strom led the development of a **bi-monthly blog** featuring summaries of our faculty's innovative research and teaching interests. Posted on our website, the blog—now in its second semester—has received hundreds of hits! Entitled *Spotlight@SPA*, the blog is intended to be topical, but not partisan, with the goal of bringing solid research to bear on questions that concern us all.
- Finally, thanks to the generous support of Hillsborough County and USF Innovative Education, we developed a sophisticated set of **professional marketing materials**, including promotional videos for our School, and booklets/brochures detailing our graduate and undergraduate programs. We're also in the process of producing a series of promotional videos, which will soon be available for distribution on our website.

## OUR FACULTY AND ALUMNI CONTINUE TO LEAD OUR COMMUNITY

- Our programs continue to achieve **extraordinarily high placement rates**, with nearly 100% of our MURP graduates and over 80% of our MPA graduates finding jobs in federal, state, and local governments, the private sector, and non-profits and NGO's within a few months of graduation. For example, recent graduates have been named to senior administrative and planning positions within various cities and counties, not just in Florida, but as far away as Colorado, Washington, and California; federal agencies like the VA and the Social Security Administration; planning firms and community organizations like the U.S. Green Building Council and a local county Arts Council; and non-profits like United Way.
- And our faculty continues to stay engaged with our community and our students. For example, our MURP Program Director Dr. Mark Hafen serves on the **Tampa Bay Climate Science Advisory Panel**. Associate Professor Dr. Robin Ersing continues to represent us on the **USF Faculty Senate** and also serves as the faculty advisor for the **USF American Red Cross Club**, as well as the academic liaison to the **Latino Coalition of Tampa Bay**. Associate Professor Dr. Elizabeth Strom serves as an advisor to the **Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners** on affordable housing strategies (along with a team of our MPA Capstone students).
- Associate Professor Dr. Evangeline Linkous is the faculty liaison to the **APA Florida Chapter Sun Coast Section**, as well as to our **Student Planning Organization** and the brand-new **Student Advocates of Progressive Planning** group; she is also the driving force behind our **Mentor A Planning Student (MAPS)** program, which matches students with area planning professionals. Research Associate Steven Fernandez conducted GIS training for Hillsborough County and is engaged in drone-based GIS research on the Mediterranean Sea and Egmont Key, Florida.
- MPA Program Director Dr. Stephen Aikins and Assistant Professor Dr. Christa Remington were named to the Board of the **ASPA Suncoast Chapter**, and Dr. Remington also serves as the faculty sponsor for the subsidiary **USF ASPA Student Chapter**. Assistant Professor Dr. Shinwoo Lee is the faculty advisor for our **ICMA Student Chapter**.
- Finally, School Director Dr. Ron Sanders continues to Chair the **Federal Salary Council**, which makes recommendations to the President and Congress on the pay of the Federal government's 2M+ white collar workforce; he also sits on the Advisory Boards of the **National Security Agency** and the **Florida Center for Cybersecurity**, advises the Department of Homeland Security on cyber workforce matters, and serves as Vice Chair of the **National Intelligence University Foundation**.

## IN MEMORIAM

- Finally, it is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of our School's first and only **Professor Emeritus Dr. Jamil Jreisat** – he passed away on November 14 after a short illness. Dr. Jreisat was the founder of USF's MPA program and a faculty member until his retirement in December 2016. Even in retirement, he continued to support our MPA program and provided invaluable counsel on how to continuously improve it. He also established and endowed a scholarship in his name, a testimony to not only his dedication to our MPA program, but also to his commitment to the development of public administrators. Dr. Jreisat was an excellent educator and, above all, a very prolific scholar of international repute whose publications continue to be utilized by scholars and governments around the world. He will be greatly missed!

## SO, WE REALLY ARE ON THE MOVE!

- In sum, it has once again been a transformational year for the School of Public Affairs, we've continued to make tremendous progress in that regard, but while our progress has been remarkable, we're not stopping. We're a School on the move, and we intend to keep doing so!

## APPENDIX: RECENT FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

- Aikins, S.K.** (2019). Determinants of Digital Divide in Africa and Policy Implications. *International Journal of Public Administration in the Digital Age*, 6(1): 64-79.
- Aikins, S.K.** (2019). Managing Cybersecurity Risks of SCADA Networks of Critical Infrastructure in the IoT Environment. In Z. Mahmood (Ed.), *Security, Privacy and Trust in the IoT Environment* (pp. 3-23). Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Hu, S., **Chen, P.**, Feifei, X., & Chi, X. (in press 2019). Exploring the Effect of Battery Capacity on Electric Vehicle Sharing Programs using a Simulation Approach. *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, 77(1): 164-177.
- Liu, Q., Ding, C., & **Chen, P.** (in press 2020). A Panel Analysis of the Effect of the Urban Environment on the Spatiotemporal Pattern of Taxi Demand. *Travel Behaviour and Society*, 18(1): 29-36.
- Ersing, R.L.** (2019). Global Resilience through Opportunities for Women: Applied Strategies from the U.S. in the Context of Environmental Hazards. In J. Drolet (Ed.), *Rebuilding Lives Post-Disaster* (pp. 91-108). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ersing, R.L.** (2019). The Impact of Hurricanes on Migrant Farm Workers in Volusia County, Florida, USA. In M. Alston, T. Hazeleger, & D. Hargreaves (Eds.), *Social Work and Disasters: A Handbook for Practice* (pp. 206-214). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Shuvo, S.S., Yilmaz, Y., Bush, A.J., & **Hafen, M.R.** (2019). Scenario Planning for Sea Level Rise via Reinforcement Learning. Proceedings of the *IEEE Global Conference on Signal and Information Processing*. Ottawa, Canada: GlobalSIP.
- Salkowe, R. & **Hafen, M.R.** (forthcoming 2020). Climate Change and Loss of Biodiversity. In G. Luber & J. Lemery (Eds.), *Global Climate Change and Human Health: From Science to Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lee, G.R., Lee, S., Malatesta, D., & Fernandez, S.** (2019). Outsourcing and Organizational Performance: The Employee Perspective. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 49(8): 973-986.
- Lee, S.** (in press 2019). Employee Engagement among Federal Employees: Examining the Role of Organizational Images. *Public Management Review*.
- Linkous, E.R.** (2019). Rural Zoning: Land Use Policy in a Contested and Neglected Landscape. In E. Sclar, B. Baird-Zars, L.A. Fischer, & V.E. Stahl (Eds.), *Zoning: A Guide for 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Planning* (pp. 55-79). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Linkous, E.R., Laurian, L.A., & Neely, S.R.** (2019). Why do Counties Adopt Transfer of Development Rights Programs? *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 62(13): 2352-2374.

- Neely, S.R.** (2019). Science v. Significance: Examining the Role and Application of Statistical Significance Testing in Public Administration Research. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 43(2): 185-221.
- Hagen, L., **Neely, S.R.**, Scharf, R., & Keller, T. (in press 2020). Social Media Use for Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications During the Zika Health Crisis. *Digital Government: Research and Practice*.
- Remington, C.L.** (2019). Cultural Competence in Long Term Recovery: Lessons from the 2010 Haitian Earthquake. In F.L. Edwards (Ed.), *Housing Recovery after Disasters* (pp. 153-166). Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Kroll, A., **Remington, C.L.**, Awasthi, P., & Ganapati, N. (in press 2019). Mitigating the Negative Effects of Emotional Labor: A Study of Disaster Response and Recovery Workers after the 2010 Haiti Earthquake. *Governance*.
- Strom, E.** (in press 2019). Revisiting the Arts as a Socially Innovative Urban Development Strategy. *European Planning Studies*.
- Strom, E.** & Kerstein, R. (2019). How Asheville, North Carolina, has Leveraged Livability as an Urban Development Strategy. In F. Wagner & R.W. Caves (Eds.), *Community Livability* (pp. 65-74). New York, NY: Routledge.