All About Wilder!

Graduate Student Happenings

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Note from the Graduate Director

As we quickly approach the midpoint of this academic year, there is much excitement throughout all of our graduate programs and among our faculty. Travels near and far, new books, conference presentations and honors abound! Read about all of this and much more in "All About Wilder!"

Susan T. Gooden, Ph.D.
Director, Graduate Programs

Urban Commercial Revitalization Class Wins Best Student Project Award from Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association

The Urban Commercial Revitalization class was awarded the Best Student Project Award for 2009 by the Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association for the Hull Street Road Revitalization Plan, completed in December 2008. As Bob Kuhns, a private-sector planner and the Chair of the Awards Committee stated at the awards ceremony: “This is every bit as good as the level of professional consulting reports I see every day.”

The plan covers a roughly two-mile stretch of Hull Street Road – from Warwick Road in the City of Richmond to Manchester High School in Chesterfield County. This marks the first time that the City of Richmond and Chesterfield County have collaborated on a corridor revitalization project. The plan’s numerous recommendations for new development opportunities include a senior-citizen housing complex; an entertainment district; and a Hispanic-themed business complex with a farmer’s market, restaurants and cultural center.

Recommendations for physical improvements include better vehicular and pedestrian access from surrounding neighborhoods to the corridor, measures to improve traffic and pedestrian safety, and aesthetic enhancements.
Graduate Student Awards & Presentations

Awards:
Shawn F. Greene, Master of Public Administration student, was the recipient of the 2009 Manuel Deese Scholarship Award from the National Forum for the Black Public Administrators, Central Virginia Chapter.

Presentations:


Kathryn Monusky, Master of Sociology student, gave a presentation about how the Red Flag Campaign, an anti-violence program, is implemented at VCU to an audience of 300 people, on October 2, 2009. The event was a breakfast held to unveil Virginia’s strategic plan to prevent sexual and domestic violence. The audience consisted, in part, of Commonwealth Attorneys, representatives from the Attorney General's Office, the Virginia Department of Health, police officers, advocacy groups, and Governor-elect Bob McDonnell.

Highlights of Dr. Weiping Wu’s Scholarly Work


In June, while doing field research in China, she was invited to deliver a talk on "Innovation, Creativity, and Urban and Regional Development – Theories and Methods" to the School of Geography at Guangzhou University and a talk on "Drifting and Getting Stuck: Housing and Mobility for China's Migrants and Undocumented Immigrants in United States" to the Institute of Population Research at Fudan University (one of VCU’s 15 international partners). In September, she also was invited by Michigan State University’s Global Urban Studies Program to deliver a talk on “Migration and China’s Urban Transformation.” Recently, she was part of a U.S. delegation, organized by the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, to explore how land use planning and public participation intersect in Chinese cities.

At the annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (October 1-4), she chaired sessions on Publishing Planning Scholarship in Refereed Journals, National Science Foundation Funding Opportunities, and Urban Governance and Planning in China. In addition, she has been working as a consultant to the World Bank’s Human Development Group of the East Asia and Pacific Region on the role of higher education in the national innovation system.
Health Policy Forum

The Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs and the Science, Technology, and Society Initiative in the Department of History jointly presented a panel titled: “Health Care Reform: A Multi-Disciplinary Perspective.” This panel was presented on Wednesday, November 18, 2009 at the School of Nursing (Younger Auditorium), 1100 E. Leigh Street. A reception, immediately followed the forum, hosted by the Health Policy Society and the Wilder School’s Public Administration Student Association.

The forum moderator was Carl F. Ameringer, J.D., Ph.D., Professor of Health Policy and Politics in the Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, and speakers included:

Rick Mayes, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Political Science
*University of Richmond*

Marian Moser Jones, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Professor
Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
Science, Technology and Society Initiative
*Virginia Commonwealth University*

Jennifer M. Mellor, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Economics
Director, Schroeder Center for Health Policy
*College of William and Mary*

Larry I. Palmer, LL.B.
Director, Health Policy and Law Initiative
Professor, Department of Health Administration
College of Allied Health Professions
*Virginia Commonwealth University*

Wilder School Faculty Present Papers at Third International Conference of the Center for Integrative Mediterranean Studies

The Center for Integrative Mediterranean Studies, a partnership of VCU and the Universities of Messina, Sicily and Cordoba, Spain, held its third international conference at VCU, September 17-19, 2009. This year’s conference theme was Globalization: Implications for the Mediterranean Region. Dr. John Accordino organized a panel on socio-economic opportunities and challenges presented by globalization for Mediterranean regions, and wrote two of the papers for the panel with colleagues from the University of Messina, Drs. Fabrizio Fasulo and Michele Limosani: “Planning Regional and Local Development in a Global Economy: The Mediterranean Opportunity” and “Globalization and Small-Store Survival: A Comparison of the American Main Street and Italian Centro Commerciale Naturale Approaches.”
MURP Strengthens VCU – U.K. Connections

In Summer 2009, Dr. Michela Zonta returned to London with a group of 15 graduate students to study urban regeneration in the U.K. The two-week study abroad program was filled with excursions to Social Housing organizations – like the East End Homes and Old Ford Housing Associations – mixed-used developments – the Barbican and Coin Street Community Builders – and community development organizations incorporating creative industries and social enterprise – such as Paddington Development Trust. The group spent a significant amount of time in the East End, the venue of the upcoming 2012 Olympic Games. Historically an immigrant gateway for immigrants coming from Bangladesh, Africa, and other parts of the world, the area is characterized by pockets of concentrated poverty and the presence of council estates in a state of disrepair. Here students had the opportunity to understand how U.K. urban regeneration efforts focus on social inclusion when transforming entire neighborhoods. Other excursions included Birmingham, the two garden cities – Letchworth and Welwyn – and the Eco-Village Development known as BedZED.

Dr. Zonta is currently coordinating an exchange program between the Urban and Regional Planning program at VCU and the Town Planning department at the University of West England, Bristol. Starting in Fall 2010, graduate students at VCU will be offered the option to spend a semester in Bristol and work with local planning agencies. More information on the exchange program will be distributed soon.

For inquiries, please contact Dr. Zonta, mmzonta2@vcu.edu.

Professor Farmer’s New Book

Dr. David John Farmer, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration in the Wilder School, has authored a new book entitled *Public Administration in Perspective: Theory and Practice Through Multiple Lenses.*

Dr. Farmer specifically crafted his work to give new life to public administration theory and practice by helping readers view the discipline through a variety of perspectives. Designed for the capstone course in public administration programs, as well as a fresh approach for courses in public administration theory and organizational theory, this unique book provides a culminating experience—bringing together what has been learned in previous MPA courses without simply rehashing old content. It offers a comprehensive guide to eleven major approaches to public administration, and synthesizes them to deepen our understanding of the discipline. The eleven major perspectives that Dr. Farmer examines are: Traditional, Business, Economical, Political, Critical Theory, Post-Structural, Psychoanalytical, Feminist, Ethical, Data and Neuroscience Perspectives.

The book is expected to be published in February 2010.
2009-2010 Wilder Graduate Scholar Fellows

We are pleased to announce the selection of nine Wilder Graduate Scholars for the 2009-2010 academic year. In its fourth year, this prestigious group of scholars, their program of study, and their host employer are as follows:

Zhiela Ashtianipour
Urban & Regional Planning
Performance Management Group

Monica Behney
Public Administration
Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute

Justin Crow
Public Administration
Department of Health Professions

Leah Fremouw
Public Administration
Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Melissa McDonald
Urban & Regional Planning
Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute

Kashea Pegram
Criminal Justice
Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute

Robbie Saady
Urban & Regional Planning
Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Carrie Thompson
Public Administration
VCU Center on Human Needs

Jennifer Valentine
Sociology
VCU Clark-Hill Institute

The Wilder Graduate Scholars' Fellowships are designed to provide exceptionally well-qualified graduate students with professional work experience through a host employer. Typically, scholars are selected from our master's programs in criminal justice, homeland security, public administration, sociology, and urban and regional planning. The fellowships provide valuable service to participating employers while concurrently allowing top students to gain meaningful work experience and financial support.

Selection as a scholar is a prestigious appointment. Scholars provide service to their employer while enhancing their knowledge and experience in a work setting. Scholars are appointed for one academic year, beginning in August and ending in May. The scholar is expected to work at their at their host agency for 20 hours per week during the academic year. Each Scholar receives full in-state tuition and a $10,800 stipend.

Congratulations Wilder Scholars and many thanks to their host employers!
Recently Awarded Public Policy and Administration PhDs!

Eleven Public Policy and Administration doctoral candidates successfully defended their doctoral dissertations during the Spring and Summer 2009 semesters. Each student’s name, dissertation title, and dissertation chair is listed below:


Christina Barnes, “Examining Campus Crime at Virginia’s Colleges and Universities,” Dr. Laura Moriarty.


Amy Cook, “Parental Competencies in Juvenile Probationer and Adherence to Court Sanctions and Recidivism Rates,” Dr. Jill Gordon.


Ozgur Nikbay, “An Application of Anomie and Strain Theories to Terrorism: Suicide Attacks in Turkey,” Dr. Judyth Twigg.

Ismail Yilmaz, “Patterns of Differential Involvement in Terrorist Activities: Evidence from DHKP/C AND Turkish Hezbollah Cases,” Dr. William Newmann.

_Congratulations to our newly-minted Wilder School Ph.D.’s!

Dr. Jimmy Chen and SERL Conduct VCU Student Travel Survey

Jimmy Chen, Associate Professor of the Master of Urban and Regional Planning, Undergraduate Program Coordinator of Urban and Regional Studies, is working together with the Survey and Evaluation Research Lab (SERL) to survey a random sample of 4,000 VCU students about their travel patterns.

This grant-funded project will supplement the National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) Add-on Program administered by the United States Department of Transportation, via the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). VDOT is the state partner for this important project, which is expected to be completed by February 2010. This survey is especially important because students are not well represented in the national survey, and their distinctive travel patterns are an essential part of the local picture. The information collected will help transportation planners develop plans to address needed system improvements.
Laura Baker Wins Award for Downtown Revitalization Plan

Laura Baker, a Master of Urban & Regional Planning program graduate in May 2009, received an Award of Excellence from the Virginia Downtown Development Association for her Studio II capstone project: A Revitalization Plan for Downtown Tappahannock. Although the plan was submitted as a student project, the Awards Committee was so impressed by its quality that it judged the plan by the same criteria as the submissions of practicing professionals. The award will be presented on October 29, at the VDDA’s annual conference.

Tappahannock is a small town on Virginia’s Northern Neck. Although the project posed several challenges, Laura chose it because she wanted to help a community that is truly in need. She achieved her goal, using a combination of technical research, citizen participation and sound judgment to produce an outstanding plan that energized the community. As Forrest French, Chair of the Tappahannock Main Street Program put it:

“Laura’s decision to use Tappahannock for her capstone project and the resulting report have been a godsend to our effort with the Tappahannock Main Street Program. It instantly validated all of our previous work, brought a great deal of attention to our cause and will be our roadmap for the next ten years.” He further stated that even though Laura’s report met with immediate approval from the community, it is only now, as they are beginning to implement its recommendations, that they can truly appreciate the high quality of workmanship in the plan.
Dr. Salta Liebert’s New Book

This summer Dr. Saltanat (Salta) Liebert, Assistant Professor of Public Administration in the Wilder School, published a new book entitled *Irregular Migration from the Former Soviet Union to the United States.*

Dr. Liebert’s book is the first in the English language to examine irregular migration from post-Soviet states, focusing in particular on migration to the United States. Thousands of individuals from poor post-Soviet countries migrate to the West in search of better-paid work in an effort to provide for themselves and their families both through legal channels, and in their absence, illegally. In recent years immigration has become a topic of heated debate in many Western countries: the estimated number of undocumented immigrants in the United States has reached 11 million, precipitating a new legislative focus on reforming the immigration system, culminating in the highly controversial Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act passed by the House of Representatives in 2005 but eventually "killed" in the Senate.

Dr. Liebert examined all these issues, discussing the reasons for migration, the profile of the migrants, how the process of migration works and how the migrants obtain their U.S. visas, where they work once in the United States and their intentions with regards to their possible return home. This book explores the reality of post-Soviet migration where the mostly well-educated former professionals end up in low-wage unskilled jobs as domestic workers, child care givers, and construction workers, sometimes in exploitative labor situations. Overall, Dr. Leibert provides a detailed account of post-Soviet illegal migration to the United States, focusing in particular on Central Asian and Georgian migrants, and will be of interest to scholars of US politics as well as Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus specialists.

VCU Co-hosts the ACSP Conference

The 50th Anniversary Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) Conference was held October 1-4, 2009 in Crystal City, Virginia. VCU co-hosted the ACSP conference with Virginia Tech and University of Virginia. Dr. Meghan Gough and the MURP program did a masterful job in organizing the VCU part of the conference and played a key role in the conference including the following highlights:

- Dr. Meghan Gough served as the VCU’s Lead Organizer on the ACSP Conference Local Host Committee. She also presented a paper on her research.
- Dr. Deb Brock gave welcoming remarks at the Opening Plenary session on behalf of VCU.
- Dr. Michela Zonta organized a mobile tour “Immigrant Community Development in Washington, D.C.” and a roundtable discussion.
- Dr. Jimmy Chen organized a mobile tour “Rosslyn-Ballston TOD Corridor in Arlington County, VA” and had a poster “An In-Depth Transportation Analysis for the Northeast Megapolitan Area”.
- Dr. Weiping Wu chaired sessions on Publishing Planning Scholarship in Refereed Journals, National Science Foundation Funding Opportunities, and Urban Governance and Planning in China.
- Dr. Ivan Suen serves on the ACSP Membership Committee.
Dr. Susan T. Gooden Elected to the National Academy of Public Administrators

Susan T. Gooden, Ph.D., Professor and Director of Graduate Programs in the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at VCU, was recently elected as a Fellow-elect to the National Academy of Public Administration. Located in Washington, D.C., the Academy is involved in the most important and complex public governance issues that public administrators face.

The National Academy of Public Administration is chartered by the U.S. Congress to improve the effectiveness of government at all levels—federal, state, and local. Professor Susan Gooden was elected as a Fellow by the membership and inducted into the Academy on November 20, 2009. At age 41, Gooden is the youngest elected Fellow of the Academy, a distinction previously held by Professor H. George Frederickson who was elected into the Academy in 1978 at the age of 42.

The National Academy of Public Administration is a non-profit, independent coalition of top public management and organizational leaders who tackle the nation’s most critical and complex challenges. With a network of more than 650 distinguished Fellows and an experienced professional staff, the Academy is uniquely qualified and trusted across government to provide objective advice and practical solutions based on systematic research and expert analysis. Established in 1967, the Academy continues to make a positive impact by helping federal, state and local governments respond effectively to current circumstances and changing conditions.

Congratulations to Dr. Gooden for the outstanding achievement!

Dr. Blue Wooldridge Elected to the National Academy of Public Administrators Board of Directors

Dr. Blue Wooldridge, Professor in the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at VCU, was recently elected as a Director to the National Academy of Public Administration.

The Academy's Board of Directors provides overall guidance and leadership. Virtually all Academy activities are conducted through panels composed of Academy Fellows and others with expertise in the specific study topics. Projects are supported by the Academy's executive, administrative, and research staffs. In addition, the Academy has five Standing Panels that provide input to the Academy's agenda of studies and serve as collegial forums for Fellows to exchange ideas and to interact with experts outside the Academy, including senior government officials.

Congratulations to Dr. Wooldridge for the wonderful honor!
Upcoming Events


“The courage to question...the knowledge to inform...the tools for change.”