



# NASPAA Accreditation Team headed for Augusta

NASPAA accreditation recognizes that a master's program in public administration has gone through a rigorous process of voluntary peer review conducted by the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA), and has met NASPAA's Standards for Professional Master's Degree Programs in Public Affairs, Policy and Administration.

Once a program elects to go through the accreditation process, it begins by conducting a one year-long self study, which is then submitted to COPRA (ASU's completed Spring 2007).

COPRA reviews the self study, and then continues the process with a three-day campus visit by a COPRA-appointed site visit team. The process culminates in a final review by COPRA, which makes a decision as to whether the program is in conformity with NASPAA Standards. A distinguished three-member team will visit ASU March 3-5, 2008.



Members of the COPRA team will include Ron Morgan, chief budget officer and special projects administrator of Pearl, MS. He holds a Master of Public Policy and Administration degree from Mississippi State University.

Thomas J. Barth, Ph.D., MPA Director, University of North Carolina, Wilmington..

Edwardo Lao Rhodes, Ph.D., campus coordinator of the National Science Foundation Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation.

The group will talk with Dr. Sudha Ratan, department chair, and all MPA faculty, as well as students and alumni of the program.

In a memo to Dr. Robert R.

Parham (Dean of Katherine Reese Pamplin College of Arts and Sciences), Dr. Reinke provided an overview of the reasons for seeking accreditation and the general timeline which would be followed.

### *The three principal reasons for going through the accreditation process include:*

1 — Accreditation is the "seal of quality." Many students consciously look for an accredited program when they are considering pursuing an MPA degree.

2 — When the MPA program was established, the Board of Regents made it clear they wanted the program to move towards accreditation.

3 — The self-study process, along with a site visit, will be processes that can help our MPA program improve.

## Reinke supports military students

Augusta State is now one of 21 Georgia institutions to join the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) which is comprised of colleges and universities that have agreed to assist members of the military services complete their education. "Joining SOC means that we are making an effort to assist military people in completing their degrees. Part of this will make it easier for them to get not only transfer credit, but also credit for military training and experience," says Sandra Reinke, director of the MPA program.

"This is a major step for this institution. It shows that we are really serious about welcoming the Fort Gordon community to ASU," says Dr. Reinke. To become a member of SOC, ASU was required to meet six conditions required by the program as well as agree to the SOC principles that outline criteria for transfer of credit, academic residency requirements, and crediting learning from military training and other sources.

"Currently, ASU meets all of these with one exception. ASU has not been using the *ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services* to evaluate learning acquired in military schools. The ACE Guide provides recommendations for doing this. Individual department chairs would make the final decisions on the award of credit for such work. This is the only change ASU would need to make," she says.

## Alumnus serves on MPA

### *Community Advisory Board*

B. Todd Glover, MPA, CGAP, is



director of the Management Services Division, Columbia County Board of Commissioners. Todd was in the 1999 MPA graduating class, and believes the

program to have been the best career move he has ever made. "The small class sizes allow for interaction and discussion, and the professors know you by name and care about your success. I continue to utilize MPA classmates as resources in their fields of expertise. The degree has opened doors that allowed me to advance my career."



# MPA news and views.....



## Scott Argo named Outstanding New Professional

**Scott Argo**, admissions, was the recipient of the Outstanding New Professional Award at the Georgia Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (GACRAO) conference in Savannah, Ga. He was also named to the Executive Committee for the 2008 conference.

## Reinke receives publication award

**Sandra Rinke**, MPA director, had an article entitled *Abu Ghraib: A Case of Moral and Administrative Failure* selected as the 2006 best published article in *Public Integrity*, a peer-reviewed journal that focuses on ethical issues in politics and public service.

## Darryl Nettles' paper slated for international conference

Under Dr. Miller's direction, MPA student **Darryl Nettles** had a paper accepted at the 2nd International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences at the University of Granada, Spain, in July entitled *Liberia: Study of Liberian Government and its Relationship to American Government*. Nettles' work was published in the conference's online proceedings.

## Immigrant homeland perception explored

Dr. Sunita Manian, associate professor of political economy and coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program at Georgia College and State University, gave a presentation titled *Coconut Iden-*

*tity or as British as Chicken Tikka Masala?* to Dr. Ratan's Global Issues undergraduate seminar and Paul Harris' graduate Urban Policy seminar on Nov. 15. The talk explored the lives of two South Asian immigrants in Britain and how they perceive their homeland. The presentation was hosted by the Department of Political Science and the Center for Immigration Studies.



## Community Involvement Fair

From left, Associate Director of Student Activities Ronald Lunk, Student Employment Manager Melissa Hudson, **Harlem Mayor Scott Dean** (member of MPA Advisory Committee), and Columbia County Family Connection Executive Director **Julie Miller** (MPA student) pose during the Community Involvement Fair last October.



## AT&T Donation to ASU

**Scott Argo**, MPA student, and **Katherine Sweeney**, MPA '99, registrar and admissions director; William Wellnitz, biology; William A. Bloodworth, Jr., president; AT&T's Stan Shepherd; State Sen. Ed Tarver; and Samuel Sullivan, vice president for academic affairs, celebrate the \$50,000 donation from AT&T.

## AIDs and food production topic of Dr. Hammond's paper

**Augustine Hammond**, MPA research methods professor, along with MPA student, **Eric Schweser**, presented a paper, *An Examination of the Relationship between Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome and Food Production in Sub-Saharan Africa*, at the Southeast Conference on Public Administration (SECoPA) in Nashville, Tenn., in September.

## Tenure

**Dr. Steven Weiss** received tenure in December 2007.

## Harris presents immigration studies to international group in Germany

**Paul Harris**, political science, presented a paper, *Civic Education and Civic Development in the Schools and Beyond: A Small Georgia Community Responds to Large Scale Latino Immigration*, at the International Citizenship Education in an Age of Worldwide Migration in Muenster, Germany, in September.

He also presented a paper titled *The City of Dalton's (Georgia) Response to Immigration: A Best Practices Example?* at the Southeast Conference on Public Administration in Nashville, Tenn., in September.



**Congratulations to Dr. Paul Harris for his promotion to full professor. Dr. Harris will also receive the prestigious Town and Gown Award at the 2008 Alumni Awards Banquet.**

## Dr. Ratan speaks on South Asia

**Sudha Ratan**, political science, presented *The Cleaving of South Asia: Lessons for U.S. Policy in the Region* and conducted a faculty development workshop titled Framing Issues in South Asia at Georgia College and State University in October.

## Dr. Miller draws upon background as firefighter

**Dr. Randall Miller** presented research on how a well-meant public finance policy kept university dormitories in Illinois from retrofitting with fire sprinklers at the Southeastern Conference on Public Administration, Nashville, TN, September 27-29, 2007. The end result of this research project was the passage of Illinois Fire Sprinkler Dormitory Act (110 ILCS 47), effective Jan. 1, 2005.

**Dr. Miller also received tenure and will be promoted to associate professor in August 2008.**

# Graniteville — after the **Crash**

## *Assessing the immediate and long-term effects of disaster on a small town*

*(The August 2007 edition of PA Times featured the research of 10 MPA students under the guidance of by Dr. Saundra Reinke, PA Times board member. The article was included in the publication's special section on the State of Emergency management.)*

"On January 6, 2005, a northbound Norfolk Southern train derailed after slamming into a parked train in the small town of Graniteville, SC. The collision derailed 14 cars, including two carrying chlorine. One of those cars, the ninth, was breached, releasing 90 tons of chlorine into the environment. As a result, nine people died and over 5,400 people were evacuated from a one-mile area surrounding the accident site.

In the aftermath of this tragedy, local first responders have improved training, equip-

ment and communication. But the community is still suffering from the disaster.

"The initial response to the accident was hampered by lack of communication, incompatible communication systems and squabbling between the local fire chief and sheriff over who was in charge. But within a few hours, these issues had been worked out and the remainder of the response went smoothly.

"The local environment seems to have recovered completely from the chlorine spill. However, questions remain about the long-term impact of chlorine exposure on Graniteville's human population.

"Unemployment and poverty remain major problems for Graniteville....Homes that were not immediately repaired have

become uninsurable, and many residents lack health insurance of any kind. These factors, plus the lingering effect of the accident itself, have left many residents suffering psychologically.

"An exploratory study conducted by Jean Silva found that 19 percent of residents reported using antidepressants, tranquilizers, or other psychiatric medication to cope with their problems. The chlorine has been cleaned up, but its effects linger in the minds and hearts of Graniteville residents."

*(Students who worked on the project were Kelly Edwards, Kristie Johnson-Gregory, Greg Mason, Darryl Nettles, Lucas Rakovsky, Eric Schweser, Jeane Silva, Katarzyna Steinke-Fry, Shatareia Stokes and Jody Wilson.)*

## **Mexicans & Americans work together in CSRA**

**Javier Juarez-Perez** had an article on "The Centro Educativo" published in the January 2008 edition of the *PA Times*, published by the American Society for Public

Administration. His research involved the educational program which he worked with in North Augusta, SC. As an intern, he helped Mexicans and Latinos living in the CSRA to start, continue, or finish their basic education, giving them the tools to begin university education or pursue technical training. The program also helped Latinos engage in mainstream American

culture so that they were able to positively contribute to the community social life where they live.

"My internship made me more aware of all the collective effort in addressing the challenge brought about as a result of large scale migration from Mexico and Latino countries to the United States," said Javier,

## **Former MPA student heads troubled Police Department**

**Charles E. Lowe** was chief of police at Longwood University in rural Farmville, VA, when he was chosen to lead Florida Atlantic University's 42-person security department that had weathered a sex scandal, the loss of a second police chief and an interim chief since 2005.

"I'm fairly family with the people in those articles and these are people that are no longer here," Lowe said after the university announced he was hired. "I feel there is a core group committed to the success of the department."

FAU's most recent chief resigned after two of his commanders were accused of wrongdoing. A deputy chief resigned after his former employer found he had created a hostile work environment for a female trooper he once dated. Another officer left after pornographic materials were found in his office and patrol car. An interim chief

quit because he thought the selection process took too long. Another was dropped supposedly by an internal investigation that found one of the officers had sexually harassed three co-workers.

Lowe, 40, says that FAU has changed policies, shifted duties and created procedures that have "helped the department work through some of these issues." He plans to ensure that the department earns accreditation to help boost officers' morale and also to create a strong crime prevention program.

FAU, with about 26,000 students spread over seven campuses reported 276 burglaries at its Boca Raton campus and residence Halls from 2003-05. Longwood, with 3,700 undergraduate students and a 13-member police department, dealt with only 12 during the same period.

Lowe beat out four candidates on the short list. He began his new position in September 2007 with an annual salary of \$100,000. After receiving his bachelor's degree from Troy State University, he worked on his master's in public administration at Augusta State University.

His first police experience was as a special agent in the Air Force from 1992-96 when he investigated white-collar crimes, conducted narcotics investigations and won a Meritorious Service Medal for investigating the corruption of a government official. He worked at other colleges and universities following military service.

"I kind of dipped my toe in the water and found something that definitely agreed with me," Lowe said in an interview with the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*. "I felt there was more of an opportunity to impact the community you were policing."

## MPAs take charge

Catherine Tuthill Weldon, MPA '01, wrote from Blaine, MN, where her husband Patrick is working on his MBA at the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management. She is up for promotion at the Social Security Administration in St. Paul, MN, and was excited about being selected to serve on the 2030 Advisory Committee for the City of Blaine, where they live. She was one of 16 Mayoral appointments selected from the community to review a variety of planning elements and potential issues and solutions, then provide recommendations to the city council and planning commission to create Blaine's 2030 Comprehensive Plan. "I am looking forward to getting more involved in the local level of public affairs again," she says. (E-mail her at [Catherine.Weldon@ssa.gov](mailto:Catherine.Weldon@ssa.gov))

Patrick Clayton, MPA '04, is a task force supervisor with the Drug Enforcement Agency, and says that completing the MPA program was one of the best decisions of his adult life. "I spent 28 years in the public sector in a variety of law enforcement leadership positions. Participating in the MPA program has greatly enhanced my experience. As a person who has sat on many personnel screening boards, I am more interested in what an applicant 'can do' than what they know. ASU's MPA program will help to develop you into a 'can do' person."



Donald Miles, MPA '04, recently joined the staff of USC Aiken's Institutional Effectiveness Office as statistical and research analyst. Prior to this he worked in the Advertising Department at the Augusta Chronicle as a multimedia sales executive. He lives in Aiken where he is studying and training in the ministry at Mt. Moriah Baptist Church. He is a member of the USC Aiken Alumni Council and the University's Inclusion Advisory Committee.



"Each of my professors in the MPA program left lasting imprints on my education. Their valuable insights and knowledge have been very helpful in my efforts to find and locate a job opportunity such as this one. It is because of the sound preparation that I received through the MPA program at ASU that I feel I was able to make a successful transition into this career path."

## Changing the world, one woman at a time

LaKeisha Lowe, MPA '07 — Wesleyan College, BA '03

Community Outreach Coordinator, Helping Hands

In 1836, Wesleyan College was the first college in the world chartered to grant degrees to women. Since that time, scores of Wesleyan women have gone out into the world to do some rather amazing things, including becoming the first woman to receive a Doctor of Medicine degree and the first woman to argue a case before the Georgia Supreme Court. (The following is from the Wesleyan alumnae newsletter.)

LaKeisha Lowe graduated from Wesleyan in 2003 as an English major with a minor in political science, then went to Augusta State University for her Master's in Public Administration. She worked in Wesleyan's Admissions Office, Bibb County public school system, a local attorney's office and was awarded a graduate assistantship at Augusta State.



In July 2007, she accepted a position as community outreach coordinator with Helping Hands, Inc., in Aiken, SC, a 24-hour residential care center for child victims of abuse, abandonment, or neglect. She is responsible for training, recruiting and placing Helping Hands volunteers in the Aiken community, as well as educating the community about fundraising opportunities.

"I am thrilled, it is the perfect job for me. It combines my passion of working with youth, as well as my own desire to work in the non-profit arena," LaKeisha told the *Aiken Standard* during a recent interview.

LaKeisha wanted to combine her education and administrative skills with her interest in giving to the community and helping children, and Helping Hands, Inc., was a perfect fit.

As a Wesleyan student, she fondly remembers that one of her most positive experiences was the relationships she built with professors. "(They) influenced me to always strive to become a better writer." Those strong writing, researching, reading, note taking and presentation skills honed at Wesleyan helped her not only in graduate school but also in obtaining the job of her dreams.

Following Wesleyan graduation, the job market was not ideal for LaKeisha's career path, so she decided that a master's program in public administration would be the right choice for her. She enrolled at Augusta State University and graduated with honors in the M.P.A. program in 2007.

"I believe that an all women's environment provides a unique college and education experience to female students that cannot be experienced at a co-ed college or university," says LaKeisha. "If there is one thing that I would like others to know about Wesleyan, it is that this college has so much to offer beyond the years you spend there," says LaKeisha. "Wesleyan is a college that impacts you for the rest of your life."

She also believes that the small, close-knit Wesleyan community helped her not only establish relationships with other students, but, also, the faculty. It was Dr. Matthew Martin, professor of English, that LaKeisha was eager to share the good news of her new employment with Helping Hands, Inc., because Martin, as well as her other professors, encouraged her to feel like an individual on campus and not just a student number.

**Congratulations  
December Graduates**

**Joanne Saunders**

**Amanda Prior**

**Kristina Deidrich**

**Tiywana Williams**

**Looking for a job, or career change?**

Public service education has just created a nationwide public and nonprofit sector job site for graduates with MPA and MPP degrees. The new site was launched in December and already has more than 250 job postings. It is free to all MPA/MPP degrees. Just click on [www.publicservicecareers.org](http://www.publicservicecareers.org), create your profile, post your resume, and browse positions that might interest you.

Yes — it's confidential, so go for it!