

# Political Science Alumni Newsletter

"You are not here merely to make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement."

- Woodrow Wilson



Volume VIII, Issue II

## Greetings!

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Many political science majors over the years have taken advantage of the Public Administration Certificate Program which, as a youthful faculty member, I and an Economics colleague established in 1976. Although open to all PC students, most participants have been political science majors, drawn to the program because of their interest in governmental affairs. The Program's main goal always has been to provide students with a strong foundation for pursuit of a Masters in Public Administration or Public Policy as gateways to a rewarding public service career. The profiles in this issue provide some indication that we have been successful in achieving this goal.

The alums featured this issue have pursued varied careers – a few in the kind of government administrative role normally associated with PA, but others in political and legal careers. You will notice that several have earned their MPA from the University of Connecticut. Since the 1980s, we have forged a special relationship with the UCONN PA department who regard PC as a good recruiting ground for their students and PC students, they tell us, always are among their best. The longevity of the PA program has allowed it to produce, at least, one alum, Ann Simeone, who, as you will read, has now retired from a very productive career with the federal government (earning a Ph.D along the way). To add to her own account: Ann was one of our first PA certificate recipients and, also, the program's first student administrative assistant. Ann also played a mean game of softball at PC – a hobby she pursued in Washington. So this issue is a salute to Ann and other PC political science alums who took up the challenge of public service through the PA program.

This will be my last issue as Alumni Newsletter supervisor. Susan McCarthy and I are switching jobs next year as I assume the departmental chair and she takes over the newsletter. Also, many thanks to Samantha Wood '13, our able student editor, who has doggedly pursued alums for information for their profiles, written them up, and produced the attractive design for each issue. Best of luck to Samantha as, in a couple of weeks, she enters the ranks of PC political science alums.

"Keeping the Flame Alive"

William Hudson, Professor

Samantha Wood '13, Editor



## Charles "Chaz" Plungis Class of 2008

After graduating from Providence College in 2008, Chaz enrolled at the University of Connecticut, where he earned his Master's in Public Administration. As a graduate student, he concentrated on Public Evaluation and Policy Analysis, while also receiving a certificate in Public Financial Management. Upon graduating, he accepted a job with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities as a Labor Relations Analyst. There he supported local governments with their collective bargaining efforts by conducting wage and benefit studies for use in negotiations and binding arbitration hearings. After two years in this position, he took

a job with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' central procurement agency, the Operational Service Division, in downtown Boston in March 2012. He worked as a Management Analyst, assisting Procurement Managers with data analysis and best-value determinations. He received a promotion to Procurement Manager at the beginning of this year and is currently leading a procurement for security surveillance and access control systems.

Chaz stated that his classes and professors at Providence College were big contributors to his current success. His courses, especially those in the Political Science and Social Work Departments, have been extremely beneficial throughout his career, allowing him to develop strong critical thinking, public speaking,

and writing skills. Dr. Cammarano's "Introduction to Public Administration" course encouraged him to consider a career in civil service and sparked his interest in public finance and performance management. In Dr. Hyde's "Program Evaluation" course, Chaz learned important techniques for evaluating the effectiveness of public programs.

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## Matt Boliver Class of 1985

After graduating, Matt went on to receive his Master's in Public Administration from the University of Connecticut in 1987. He has been working for the United States Civil Service under the U.S. Navy for 26 years. While at Providence, his close work with Drs. Hyde, Carlson, Trudeau and Hudson confirmed his desire to embark on a career in public service. Dr. Hudson arranged an internship for Matt with the Town of Barrington, Rhode Island, which was helpful in broadening his experiences in the public sphere. Matt lives with his wife in Middletown, RI.



## Ann Simeone

Class of 1979

Since graduating in 1979, Ann has worked for more than 30 years for the federal government in numerous capacities. After receiving her undergraduate diploma, Ann continued her studies at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale to earn her master's degree in public administration. During this time she was able to gain two internships, one at the City Manager's office of Carbondale and the other with the Office of Refugee Resettlement in Washington, DC. While still a student, she was also selected as a Presidential Management Intern which initiated her career with the federal government. She started at the Justice Department doing budget and program analysis, soon moving on to work with the International Trade Administration. After a year and a half, she decided to take a job with the Navy, where she worked for the Naval Sea System Command doing budget work. She advanced to the Financial Management position for the Los Angeles Class Attack Submarine New Construction Program. She describes this work with one of the largest programs in the Defense Department as very exciting and rewarding.

She went on to work with the Immigration and Naturalization Service and participated in setting up their program and budget analysis

office. During the past 10 years, she has also worked with the Department of Homeland Security, helping to write their first Strategic Plan and setting up many of their processes and procedures. However, a majority of her time has been spent with the US Citizenship and Immigration Services where she worked on a major business transformation project and set up three new offices for the agency. Ann retired from her senior position at the Department of Homeland Security in February 2013 after working over 31 years with the federal government. She has stated that her various experiences have all been interesting and exciting, but she has especially liked the work that allowed her to make a difference in the future of an agency.

In addition to her work with the federal government, Ann earned her doctor of philosophy in Public Administration and Public Policy from Virginia Tech in 2004. She wrote her dissertation entitled "The Ideal of Public Service: The Reality of the Rhetoric." In it she analyzed the presidential inaugural addresses and traced how the conversation of public service has changed throughout American history. Now that her government career has ended, she hopes to spend more

time on public policy research. Ann stated that Providence College, and specifically the Public Administration Program, helped prepare her for her continued education and various occupations. Her coursework for the certificate program was essential for success in her graduate work, which led to her internships and eventually her work in the federal government. In addition, she states that her classes at Providence College inspired a sense of intellectual curiosity far beyond what she believes many of her professional colleagues encountered. She attributes her strong critical thinking skills, her thirst for knowledge, and her desire for lifelong learning to the Political Science faculty. She found their enthusiasm for the field to be rich and inspirational. Ann expects that she will continue her Public Administration work by writing and teaching in the field. She considers herself a lifelong public servant and expects that any future job she attains will have its rootings in this field.

Ann resides in Virginia and enjoys traveling. She is currently learning Italian and hopes to spend considerable time in Italy after she has gained more practice in the language.



## D. Paul Koch, Jr.

### Class of 1990

Following his graduation from Providence College in 1990, Paul entered Boston University School of Law in the fall. Upon the completion of his law degree, Paul worked as an Associate in a medium-sized regional law firm focusing on commercial litigation; and later as Legislative Director for the Boston City Council promoting public policy. He advanced to Vice President of Legal Affairs for a real estate company and worked investing in, managing, and developing office and residential real estate in Boston and Cambridge. He currently serves as General Counsel to a regional real estate company with a portfolio of hospitality, retail and office assets for five states. Paul has also received his MBA from Boston University Graduate School of Management.

Paul gives credit to his Providence College professors for their extraordinary influences. His English professor, Dr. Graver, taught him how to write with discipline. Dr. Hudson illustrated the breadth, depth, and ultimate power of public policy. Dr. Bellhouse brought modern political theorists to life and surfaced their then-surprising relevance. He also states that the well rounded liberal arts education he gained here taught him to become more open minded so that even now he continuously seeks

new learning experiences. Paul commented “I am a proponent of the spectrum of ideas encountered within and through the liberal arts and sciences. Moreover, the rigor of the PC curriculum proved to be a foundation of strong preparation and academic discipline as I plugged my way through law school.”

Paul says that the Public Administration Certificate Program had a direct impact on the career he chose to pursue. The program’s cross-disciplinary coursework in Economics especially captivated his interest. He credits those Economic courses for influencing him to take certain electives in law school. Those electives then sparked his interest in real estate. The Public Administration Certificate also carried weight in his appointment as Legislative Director.

Today, Paul serves on a local Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) which keeps his involvement in Public Administration ongoing. He has been serving on it for a year and a half. The ZBA is a board with wide discretion that reviews applications for Variances and Special Permits pursuant to a comprehensive code and map regulating the uses of real property. Site visits and public hearings are common features of Board membership.

Aside from his professional work, Paul has led an active life. He has backpacked Yosemite, summited Mt. Washington, skied the back bowls of Vail, and finished the Disney half-marathon. He and his wife live in the northern suburbs of Boston with their three children, ages 6, 4, and 2.

# Stephanie DuBois

## Class of 2002

After graduating from Providence College in 2002, Stephanie started working for the New Hampshire Republican State Committee as the Manchester Field Director during the 2002 elections. The following year, she began working for the newly elected Republican Congressman Jeb Bradley, who represented New Hampshire's First Congressional District for four years. She moved to Washington DC in 2004 to become Congressman Bradley's press secretary and worked for him until his election lost in 2006. She then worked for Congressman Connie Mack from Florida for four years as his communications director, and then as Charlie Bass' communications director until he lost his election in November. Stephanie decided it was time to move off Capital Hill and landed a job with the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA), handling marketing and communications for the organization.

Stephanie comments that her classes at Providence College were very valuable to her, not necessarily because of their particular subjects, but because they helped her to develop critical skills that she now uses daily. For example, her political science independent study taught her invaluable lessons in time management. Public Program Evaluation developed her collaborative skills from its required group research project, and her American Public Policy course forced her to think outside the box for its research paper. She is grateful that the Political Science professors were strong proponents of internships and encouraged students to seek these opportunities to complement their classroom learning. Before her junior year, Stephanie interned for then-Senator Bob Smith in his district office, where she discovered her passion for writing and public relations. She then took Dr. Hyde's internship class where she wrote an op-ed piece that was published in the *New Hampshire Union Leader*. This skill has now

proven to be extremely useful in her chosen field. Stephanie says that the Public

Administration Certificate

Program has been extremely helpful throughout her career. One of her favorite classes was Dr. Hudson's American Public Policy, which she took right at the start of President

George W. Bush's first term. She liked the class discussions that focused on how the president and his administration would tackle the numerous policy issues of the day and enjoyed partaking in a formal debate on gun control. This particular class cemented her interest in current events and public policy. While working on Capital Hill for the last 10 years, she was able to see public policy develop firsthand. Although she worked in communications, Stephanie was able to influence her bosses' decision on a number of House votes that impacted many aspects of Americans' daily lives.

At NCPA, the organization's top priority is to affect positive changes at the federal and state level and to ensure independent community pharmacists are able to manage their pharmacy practices and small businesses successfully. Health care organizations like NCPA will play increasingly important roles in the development and administration of health care policy as the new health care laws are implemented.

Stephanie currently resides in Washington DC, where she has lived for almost nine years. Last year, she earned her master's degree from Georgetown University in Public Relations and Corporate Communications. She stays connected with her home state of New Hampshire through her involvement with the NH State Society, serving on its board since 2006. She is also a member of Washington Women in Public Relations, which provides networking and professional development opportunities for public relations professionals.





Jennifer  
McElroy  
Class of 2011



Charles  
Plungis

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Immediately following graduation from Providence College, Jennifer began an internship with the Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services in their policy office, where she worked on a variety of projects related to Medicaid spending. In the fall of 2011, Jennifer moved to West Hartford to pursue her Master's in Public Administration (MPA) at the University of Connecticut. There she also enrolled into the Public Financial Management Certificate Program. She took part in a summer internship at the Hartford Investment Management Company in the Municipal unit, researching municipal credits on the state, local, county, and sector level. Beginning in August of 2012, she began an internship at the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management in the Budget of Revenue Department, where she has served as a major contributor to the Economic Report of the Governor. She currently works as a graduate assistant at UConn, supporting the director of the UConn Graduate Program in Survey Research.

The curriculum of the Public Administration Certificate Program allowed Jennifer to begin her master's program a step ahead of many of her classmates. Her first two semesters at UConn were filled with classes that were very familiar to her because of the coursework she had previously taken at PC. Jenny had already been exposed to macroeconomics, public policy, policy analysis, and especially quantitative methods through her Program Evaluation class. This familiarity helped to smooth her transition to a new school in a new state. Jenny states that this educational background gives her confidence in her ability to pursue a career in Public Administration in the future. In addition, her internships at the Attorney General's Office and the Rhode Island Department of Administration during her time in college made her a marketable candidate during her graduate school application process. The professors that Jennifer had at Providence gave her the strong foundation in Political Science that she needed to succeed in her master's program. Dr. Hyde especially served as a huge influence on her during her college years. He encouraged her to enroll in the Public Administration Certificate Program and helped her decide where to pursue her MPA.

Jenny will graduate from UConn in May 2013 and hopes to continue her work in the field of public administration. She is exploring both private and public sector jobs. She is a member of the National Public Administration Honor Society, Pi Alpha Alpha. She currently lives in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, enjoys Boston Sports, walking dogs, and spending time at the beach in the summer.

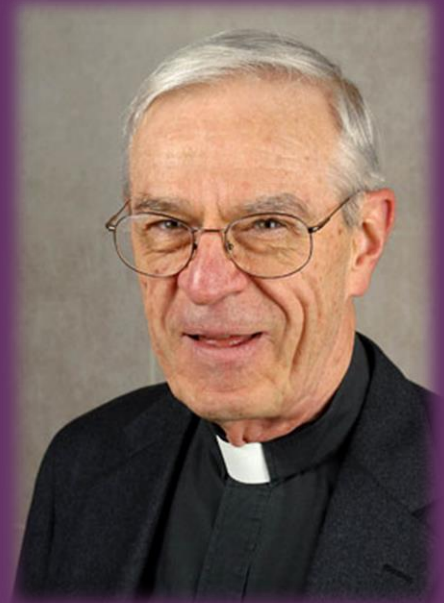
As part of that class, an alumna came to speak about her experience conducting program evaluations in the education field. This experience influenced him to learn more advanced evaluation techniques in graduate school. Throughout his senior year at PC, Chaz would frequently meet with Dr. Hyde and Dr. Cammarano to discuss his future plans. He states that they were both extremely helpful and supportive in his search.

Chaz is the oldest of five children and grew up in Mystic, Connecticut. He enjoys reading and going on day trips with his fiancé. He currently lives in Brookline, Massachusetts and is will marry Allie Agati (Class of 2011) on June 21, 2014.

# Political Science Department News

## Memorial Lecture

The first Fr. Ed Cleary O.P. Memorial Lecture took place on April 18. Ricardo Lagos, the former president of Chile, gave his talk entitled "Human Rights, Transitional Justice, and Democratization in Chile." This year's lecture was organized by Professor David Orique O.P. from the History Department, Dr. Jeff Pugh from the Political Science Department, and Pi Sigma Alpha. The Fr. Ed Cleary Memorial Lecture series is intended to be annual event.



## Forand Research Scholarship

On April 23, two seniors presented the results of their independent Forand research projects. Laura O'Neill discussed her project on "Community Organizing and the New Democracy in the U.S.", while Jessica Ulbricht presented on "Unemployment in the Wake of the Great Recession."

The Forand Research Scholars program is open to rising seniors who are interested in conducting community-based research on a public policy issue, with a view to contributing to community improvement in the region. Selection is based on academic achievements, financial need, project potential, and community/school activities. The program was established for the Political Science Department to honor the work of Congressman Aime Forand, who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1937-1961.

## New Faculty Hire

The Political Science Department has hired a new faculty member who will begin teaching in the fall. Dr. Gizem Zencirci, who received her PhD from University of Massachusetts Amherst, will be teaching courses in comparative politics. Originally from Turkey, her focus will be on Middle Eastern Politics and her research specialization lies in Human Rights.

## Chair Change

Professor McCarthy is finishing up her chairmanship duties this semester. Dr. Hudson will reassume the position of Chair beginning in July 2013.

