



# OUTREACH

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY MARRIOTT SCHOOL | ROMNEY INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT | FALL 2017

## Women and Education

Eva Witesman, an associate professor at the Romney Institute, gave a devotional in June titled “Women and Education: A Future Only God Could See for You” that has more than 72,000 views—the most viewed individual speech on [Speeches.byu.edu](http://Speeches.byu.edu) in the last three months.

Witesman gives all the credit to the Spirit when it comes to the idea for her devotional. It started when she thought to herself, “If I were to give a TED Talk, what would my topic be?” The question then changed to, “What would I give my devotional on?” At some point, the topic of women and education became clear, and just two weeks later, she was invited to give a devotional.

“I think what is really important is that the value of women’s education resonated with so many people,” Witesman says. “A lot of people who were questioning whether the Spirit was really guiding them toward their studies received additional encouragement and confirmation through the Spirit during this devotional.”

Since giving the devotional, Witesman has received additional speaking invitations and other opportunities to share her experiences and thoughts on this topic. She was invited to give the keynote speech at the School of Family Life’s Women in Academia conference; a YSA regional con-

ference in Vancouver, Canada; and a gathering for young women in Bountiful, Utah.

In addition, she has had opportunities to share her knowledge and expertise on nonprofits and overhead through *Deseret News* and BYU Radio. *Deseret News* requested she write a regular, monthly opinion piece, and Witesman’s op-ed about being a peacemaker is the one she’s most proud of. *Deseret Book* has also reached out about possible opportunities.

“I know Eva has received positive feedback from numerous people,” says Lori Wadsworth, director and associate professor of public management. “I have seen just a few of these examples personally, particularly women who felt profoundly moved by the expression of her testimony of the gospel and how the pursuit of education fits within the gospel.”

Among the many individuals who have reached out to her, a patriarch shared an experience with Witesman. He told her about giving blessings to a number of young women and stating how they would have the opportunity to serve a full-time mission. At the time, the percentage of women serving missions was low in comparison to men, but he received confirmation that his statements were right. Shortly afterward, the missionary age for women was lowered, and many more sister missionaries began serving.



Associate professor Eva Witesman speaks at the BYU devotional on 27 June. (Ari Davis)

“He basically said, ‘You talked about this future that only God can see for you in your devotional, and I got a glimpse of that through giving these blessings,’” Witesman says. “He saw for these young women a future that they didn’t see for themselves, but God did.”

Witesman noted an interesting observation about the emails she received from people about her devotional. Although they were all touched by her remarks, not everyone had the same connection. Different parts of the devotional resonated with different people. “It’s more about the Spirit speaking to individual people and less about my devotional being special,” she says.

*Witesman’s full address can be found at [speeches.byu.edu/talks/eva-witesman\\_women-education-future-god-see/](http://speeches.byu.edu/talks/eva-witesman_women-education-future-god-see/).*

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# From the Director



In 1992, I started the Executive MPA program at the BYU Salt Lake Center. From my seat at the back of the room, I watched faculty members such as Dale Wright, Gary Cornia, Bob Parsons, Larry Walters, Lennis Knighton, Gloria Wheeler, Karl Snow, and Doyle Buckwalter

share knowledge and wisdom in their particular area of specialty and, more important, share their passion for public service. They opened up my mind in significant ways, and the direction of my life was changed.

Several years later when I joined the George W. Romney Institute of Public Management, I was thrilled to work alongside these people I admired so much. I am now surrounded by illustrious faculty members who have kept the same spirit of imparting knowledge and passion for public service. Our faculty strive for excellence in teaching, research, and service, and in so doing, they are making a difference in the classroom and beyond.

One of the greatest joys of the Romney Institute is working closely with the staff. They are the best in the world! Talented and professional, they do all they can to make sure that our students enjoy great experiences and opportunities at all stages of the educational process, from application to alumni.

The greatest strength of our MPA program has always been our students. They have a strong desire to make a difference in the

world. They are actively involved in the educational process, soaking up all the learning that they can as they become well-prepared for meaningful careers.

Recently I attended the ten-year reunion of the class of 2007. As I looked over the class members in attendance, I was reminded of our many alums throughout the country and the world. What an impressive groups of people you are! You have made a significant impact in your workplaces, your families, and your communities. And you are ready and willing to help our current students, other alums, and the program.

We often hear alums asking how they can help. May I suggest four calls to action: first, keep us up to date on your life—we want to know what you're doing and where you're at; second, let us know of any jobs or internships in your workplace; third, look for potential students who are interested in public service and refer them to our program; and fourth, consider donating to the Romney Institute to help provide scholarships and programs that benefit students and further the work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori".

Lori Wadsworth  
Director  
Romney Institute of Public Management

## GAG TIME

BY ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF, CLASS OF '01



## OUTREACH FALL 2017 ISSUE

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# Institute News

## Visiting Faculty Alum Hopes to Foster Collaboration

Brigham Young University's Romney Institute of Public Management welcomed back Andrew Heiss as a visiting faculty member starting fall semester. Heiss is a class of 2012 BYU Marriott MPA graduate and later went on to earn his PhD from Duke University in public policy with a concentration in political studies. Heiss focuses his research on how international nongovernmental organizations and large human rights groups work in authoritarian regimes and dictatorships, and how they're influenced by the laws of the countries they work in.

"Andrew was one of the most intelligent and giving students we had ever had," says Jeffery Thompson, associate professor of Public Management at the Romney institute. "We knew that he

would be a tremendous citizen for our department as a faculty member and that his scholarly work will be top-notch. It's wonderful to have him on board."

Heiss says he is excited to work with the ambitious students at BYU Marriott and in an atmosphere that enables him to mix church-related concepts with academics. He will teach courses in data visualization, science communication, and microeconomics.

"I want students to be able to use all of this helpful information and everything they're learning in the MPA program to go change the world," Heiss says.

As a student at BYU, Heiss was driven by that same optimistic idea and hopes students will also share their future research reports and evaluations the way he has.



Andrew Heiss

"That's kind of what I hope to contribute to the Romney, a culture of collaboration and being open and transparent in sharing everything that you possibly can," Heiss says.

## MPA Professor Named IABS President

Brad Agle, George W. Romney endowed professor, was installed as president of the International Association for Business and Society at the group's annual meeting held in Amsterdam.

Agle's presidential term is the fourth year of a five-year leadership track he was elected to by the IABS membership in 2014. He has previously served as assistant conference chair, conference chair, and president-elect; following the association's annual meeting, held in Hong Kong next year, he will serve as past president. IABS is an academic association comprised of approximately three hundred professors from around the world who do research

on the intersection between the institution of business and the other institutions of society.

A member of the MPA faculty since 2009, Agle is an active researcher in business ethics, stakeholder management, CEO leadership, and religious influences on business. His work has been featured in various media outlets including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and CNN, and he has been a guest on multiple CNBC programs. Agle also serves as a fellow in the BYU Wheatley Institution and as chair of the biannual Teaching Ethics in Universities conference.



Brad Agle



# Alumni News

## Fellowship Changes Alum's Career Path

A prestigious government program changed 2015 alum Todd Tapp's career plans—a program he wasn't even going to apply for until his MPA professors encouraged him.

Tapp says his professors inspired, encouraged, and helped him prepare his application for the U.S. Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF) position. The PMF is a highly selective, prestigious two-year leadership and development program administered by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

Applicants underwent an arduous, three-phase program interview and testing process. The first phase involved completing an online exam, five essays, and a résumé, which Tapp turned in three minutes before the deadline. The second phase required applicants to fly to Washington D.C. for an in-person assessment that lasted three to four hours. For the last phase, finalists interviewed for PMF slots within different government agencies.

"The process in D.C. was probably one of the more challenging interviews I've been through," Tapp says. "I couldn't believe I made it that far and had offers in front of me. It felt like it was too good of an opportunity to pass up, even if I ended up leaving government after the two-year fellowship."

The Office of Personnel Management has now streamlined the application and selection procedure, converting to a digital process that allows more students to complete the entire process without travel costs. With this change, the BYU MPA

program is now working towards having 100 percent of the second-year student body apply for the program.

Tapp ended up working for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). During his two years, he worked in six different offices: SBA's Washington D.C. Field Office, SBA Headquarters' Office of Communications and Public Liaison, SBA Headquarters' Office of Economic Opportunity, U.S. Agency for International Development's Global Development Lab, U.S. Agency for International Development's Development Credit Authority, and SBA Headquarters' Office of Capital Access. "It's been a wild ride because every four months, right when you start to feel comfortable, they move you to a different office," Tapp says.

During the fellowship, Tapp gained extensive experience in grants management, program management, program evaluation, international development, capital markets and banking, and several other fields. He also experienced other opportunities, including a two-month detail with the SBA's Office of Disaster Assistance to help with the recovery efforts for Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

When the fellowship ended, Tapp changed from being a PMF to a financial analyst. "I came from micro-lending and learned that the SBA had a microloan program working with refugees, immigrants, and all kinds of disadvantaged entrepreneurs," Tapp says. "I felt like that would be the best fit."



Todd Tapp

Although he initially had no intention of working for the federal government, Tapp couldn't be happier. "I've had opportunities to experience deep fulfillment, and I've been engaged in meaningful work that affects a lot of people" he says.

After his experience as a PMF, Tapp is an advocate of the program and encourages other MPA students to apply for the fellowship, even if they're not interested in government work. "You compete against people with impressive experience and loaded résumés from elite graduate programs all over the country," Tapp says. "I've learned that the BYU MPA program is second to none, and the program prepares graduates for their professional careers as well as any program in the country."

Tapp is grateful for the encouragement he received from the MPA program and for the push to leave his comfort zone and apply for the fellowship—a decision that will undoubtedly shape his entire career.

# Valuable Insight, Advice Shared at Alumni Fireside

Messages delivered during the fall 2017 MPA fireside for alumni revolved around experiences, principles, and advice that blend what individuals do in their careers with spiritual aspects of seeking and following guidance from Heavenly Father, exercising faith while making decisions, and balancing needs of families with the desire to be successful at work.

Marilee Richins, deputy executive director, State of Utah Department of Administrative Services; Jamie Davidson, city manager of Orem, Utah; and Tanise Chung-Hoon, managing director at LDS Philanthropies spoke at the fireside.

Richins started the fireside by sharing seven B's that are important in launching a professional career: be obedient, flexible, grateful, still, ready, a disciple, and valiant. These "be's" encapsulate what she's learned on her own personal journey, Richins noted.

"We have covenanted to use our skills, talents, time, and resources in any way that He asks us to," Richins said. "In our professions, that's precisely what we are asked to do. As you honor those covenants in the sphere in which you currently serve, the Lord will expand that sphere, and He will expand you. You will grow not only professionally but personally, spiritually, and in every other way that matters."

Davidson shared three points that have helped him over the course of his professional life.

- First, integrity matters. Have character, then stand behind and grow it.
- Second, love and enjoy work, but remember it's a temporal assignment. After a professional career, there are things much more important than a job.
- Third, take the time that an employer gives to enjoy life, recreate, and find meaning and fulfillment in things

other than a desk, in-box, or latest management strategy.

"Be thankful and recognize the hand of God in your life and professional experiences," Davidson said. "We can be a catalyst in the decisions we make, the way we conduct ourselves, and the manner we lead organizations."

Chung-Hoon gave examples of how she applied six work behaviors to her life. The six behaviors, which fit any work envi-

ronment, are building capability, defining direction, counseling together, organizing the work, accomplishing the work, and rendering an account.

life and how He has guided us to accomplish the things that help us become our best," Chung-Hoon said. "You never know how the Lord has prepared you to use your strengths. You never know what you need to do, but follow with faith. To the Lord, what we do is not as important as who we become because of what we do. Follow the example of the Savior as a leader."

Overall, approximately 110 alumni, students, and spouses attended the 21

"We have covenanted to use our skills, talents, time, and resources in any way that He asks us to," Richins says.

ronment, are building capability, defining direction, counseling together, organizing the work, accomplishing the work, and rendering an account.

"It's so much easier when you look backward to see the Lord's hand in your

August gathering. "I loved looking across the room and seeing alums from across the many years of the MPA program, all gathered together to listen, learn, and be inspired," said Lori Wadsworth, director of the Romney Institute.

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## Join the Official LinkedIn BYU MPA Alumni Group

The BYU MPA program has been working hard to enhance its official LinkedIn group. The purpose of the group, called BYU MPA George W. Romney Institute of Public Management Alumni, is to better connect MPA graduates with job opportunities and other BYU MPA alumni, as well as inform them of current MPA-related events. Within the group, members can also ask questions, post current job openings, and share other information that would provide value to the

alumni network.

If you aren't a member of the group, please join. Go to [linkedin.com/groups/113677](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/113677), then click on "Ask to Join." After your request is granted (which could take up to a week), you can start conversations, message other group members, and enjoy staying connected.



# Student News

## Buckwalter Intern Award Winners Announced

Three second-year MPA students were recognized with the distinguished Doyle W. Buckwalter Outstanding Public Intern Award, which recognizes exceptional performance during an internship and includes a cash prize. Alexander Zeller was named the winner of the Buckwalter award, and Jordan Hunter and Elise Simonsen were finalists.

“Apparently I was the last person to read the email announcing the winner,” says Zeller, a native of Portland, Oregon. “I found out about it because someone congratulated me. I thought, ‘Oh, wow, that’s amazing!’”

Zeller interned for the Department of Commerce’s International Trade Administration, where his main responsibilities included attending events such as congressional hearings, symposiums, and conferences on the aerospace industry. He also collected and analyzed information to determine industry patterns, trends, and forecasts so informed decisions could be made.

“I had the opportunity to become an expert in the U.S. helicopter market, so I spent a good majority of my time studying that,” Zeller says. “It culminated in a report that I was the principle author for, which will be published within the next few months.”

Zeller said he’s been unsure of what he’s wanted to do for a while, but his internship experience brought clarity. Now he hopes to continue to work in the aerospace industry.



From left to right: Jordan Hunter, Alexander Zeller, and Elise Simonsen.

Kim Wells, Zeller’s advisor, says Zeller was asked to perform duties far beyond those of an intern. “He willingly took on the responsibilities of a full-time international trade specialist and quickly became our ‘go-to’ guy for quick turnaround tasks and new projects,” says Wells. “If he is an example of the quality of students at the BYU Marriott, we will definitely look to host more interns in the future.”

Hunter, from Glendale, Arizona, was introduced to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) on the DC career trip. “When I went to visit, I was impressed with their presentation and everything they do there,” Hunter says. “I put a lot of effort into my application.”

Hunter’s main responsibilities included researching, analyzing, and reporting data sets and presenting data

to people in higher positions in a visually appealing and informative way. During his experience, Hunter learned not everything is done perfectly. “There are always ways to improve any kind of performance,” Hunter says. “You shouldn’t be afraid to suggest a new way of doing things.”

Hunter will be applying to PhD programs after graduation but can see himself going back to GAO. He gives the GAO credit for him being named a Buckwalter finalist because the office empowers interns to have a good experience.

Amy E. Lyon, Hunter’s advisor, says she’s thrilled Jordan is a finalist. “GAO greatly benefited from the knowledge and skills that he has developed through his graduate studies,” Lyon says. “The work he accomplished during his internship continues to have a positive

and lasting impact on our efforts to measure and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our Learning Center operations.”

Simonsen, a native of Cedar City, Utah, heard about Empower Playgrounds Inc. (EPI) through the Ballard Center. “I’ve done volunteer work in Ghana before, and Empower Playgrounds’ whole focus is education in Ghana,” she says. “I was excited about that connection.”

Simonsen cleaned, coded, and analyzed last year’s data gathered by students and administration on the effectiveness

of the school’s programs and projects, including the merry-go-round systems, science kits, and library projects. She also started to create a new evaluation for the current year.

While Simonsen is uncertain where she’ll be after graduation, she does know evaluation will be a major part of what she does. “I feel like more nonprofits need to be doing a better job at evaluation,” she says. “A lot of them are out to do a mission, but then they don’t measure the impact they’re having.”

Crys Kevan Lee, Simonsen’s advisor, says Simonsen was the best intern EPI

has ever had. “Not only did her evaluation contribute to this year, Elise helped create a pragmatic evaluation in a way that will be a foundation for EPI’s data collection for years to come,” Lee says. “We are grateful for her contributions that will improve our ability to empower children in Ghana.”

The award is named after Doyle Buckwalter, a former faculty member, associate director, and internship coordinator of the Romney Institute of Public Management. The awards were presented to the students at the Alumnus of the Year luncheon on 20 October.

## Fall 2017 Admission Statistics

MPA	2017	EMPA	2017
Number of Applicants	96	Number of Applicants	64
Number Admitted	65	Number Admitted	51
Number Accepted Offer of Admission	51	Number Enrolled	46
Average GMAT	590	Average Years Work Experience	15
Average GRE	304	Average GPA	3.32
Average GPA	3.6	Average Age	40
Average Age	27	Female	52%
Female	47%	Male	48%
Male	53%	Bilingual	41%
International	8%	US Minority	9%
Bilingual	55%		
US Minority	12%		
Married	53%		
Returned Missionaries	67%		

## Silver Scoop Award

BYU Marriott School of Business screams for ice cream when the best communications materials produced by BYU Marriott programs are recognized at the annual Silver Scoop awards. Each year, programs submit nominations in four categories: social media, printed pieces, specialty pieces, and events and campaigns. At the April BYU Marriott communications and marketing meeting, category winners are announced and awarded with BYU Creamery ice cream. This year, the Romney Institute won the top prize in the specialty pieces category and grand prize overall with its colorful recruitment poster.

**You dedicate your life to helping others. Let us help you do it better.**

BYU MPA graduates are making a lasting impact in society through public administration. Our alumni are currently working in organizations like:

- Federal Government**
  - Federal Trade Commission
  - Government Office of Accountability
  - NASA
  - US Department of State
- State Government**
  - Arizona Office of the Legislative Auditor General
  - California State Bureau of Audits
  - Utah Department of Health
- Local Government**
  - 300+ cities and counties are working for 207 cities across the United States
- Nonprofit, Social, and Private Sectors**
  - Airlines
  - International Healthcare
  - Partnership for Public Services
  - Santa National Laboratories
  - World Trade Center Utah

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*"It isn't a great nation that breeds a great people. It is a great people that build a great nation."*

—George W. Romney

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## U.S. Air Force Lt. Colonel Receives Alumnus of the Year Award

The Romney Institute of Public Management named Brett Swigert, lieutenant colonel in the United States Air Force, the 2017 N. Dale Wright Alumnus of the Year. Swigert received the award on 20 October during a luncheon where he addressed students, faculty, and advisory board members.

During his address, Swigert noted it is important to look to successful predecessors and mentors who exhibit a quality that is central to public administration and is one of the three Air Force core values: service before self.

"This core value is not unique to the Air Force. We've learned about the importance of serving others since Primary, Scouting, and so on," Swigert observed. "Those who have chosen a career in public service have



Swigert speaks at luncheon after receiving award.

a unique opportunity to put this principle to practice in a very tangible way."

Swigert received his commission through the Brigham Young University Air Force ROTC program in 1996 and his MPA through the Romney Institute in 2004. He

has since served as an intelligence operations watch officer and branch chief at the National Security Agency, team lead for an executive protection team under Presidents G.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, flight commander, commandant of cadets, director of operations, inspector general, squadron commander, and deputy group commander for all space-based missile warning operations.

Swigert is currently the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's Chief of Targeting Automation for the Department of Defense. He executes policy and coordinates intelligence-driven targeting for all U.S. military services and combatant commands operating across the world. He is married to Tammy Layton, and they have two sons. Swigert enjoys reading, biking, and Scouting.