

## ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR GIVES STUDENTS KEYS TO SUCCESS



The Romney Institute of Public Management honored alumnus Rulon Stacey as this year's Administrator of the Year for his role in rescuing a small, struggling health system in northern Colorado and transforming it into an award-winning and world-recognized health care system.

Health care administrators from around the state joined faculty and students on 11 March to listen to Stacey, president and CEO of Poudre Valley Health System, speak about the path he helped pave toward receiving the prestigious 2008 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award from vice president Joe Biden.

"For BYU to honor me is the greatest distinction I have received in connection with this award," Stacey said at the Administrator of the Year lecture.

Five CEOs had filtered through Poudre Valley in the four years preceding Stacey's appointment at the hospital, which made for some rough soil from which to grow. But Stacey was determined to create a world-class health organization that performed within the top 10 percent of all health systems in the country. Before his tenure, Poudre Valley measured its performance on whether or not it fell above the national average. When Stacey, as the

newly minted CEO, told employees his vision to transform Poudre Valley into a world-class health organization, the employees laughed.

"Why would we want to be just above average?" Stacey asked his employees.

Since Stacey became CEO, Poudre Valley has been recognized twice as one of America's 100 best places to work in health care by *Modern Healthcare*. Thomson Reuters placed Poudre Valley Hospital in the top 100 in the country for five consecutive years. The health system has also expanded from a 1,500-employee operation with an annual revenue of \$250 million to a 4,500-employee organization with \$1 billion in annual revenue.

Stacey also addressed second-year MPA students at the graduation banquet, telling them that they would be successful in whatever they choose to do as long as they make it their passion.

"Passion comes from your heart; it doesn't come from your job," Stacey said. "There are those out there waiting for people like you to help innovate and improve the world."

Stacey added that his experience at the Romney Institute helped shape who he is.

AOY, cont. p. 5

### CONTENTS

From the Director .....	2	Student News:		Alumni News .....	6
Faculty News .....	3	Scholarship Recipient Gives Back....	4	Continuing Status Builds Reputation ..	8
		Bateman Award .....	5		

# From the Director



I find it fascinating to watch the process as people consider applying to our programs. Right now, as our May EMPA application deadline nears, many students are making deci-

sions about adding school to lives that already include a full mix of work, family, and church responsibilities.

Yes, it's a big commitment to add a graduate program into busy lives. But it is so worth it! The enhanced perspective and the preparation for future opportunities does make people busy today and usually leads to a busier tomorrow, but it will likely be a more productive and fulfilling tomorrow.

John Arnold, featured in the article "Romney Graduate Helps Arizona During Crisis," graduated from our EMPA program in 1997 and moved to Arizona soon after. When he walked into his first class he probably had no idea the degree would one day put him in the head position to guide Arizona through a budget crisis.

## Perspective

One purpose of education is to develop new skills. An MPA degree develops the ability to see and understand more broadly and to better prioritize and juggle competing demands. Gaining the degree challenges the brain—one learns to think differently. Often alumni will say that they think more strategically, analyze rather than emotionalize, and solve problems more effectively.

In the classroom students learn from one another's experience. Current EMPA students' combined work experience totals nearly 1,500 years. Minds are opened to new points of view, including many that challenge core beliefs and behaviors. Graduate education from the Romney Institute provides exposure to great ideas and trains the mind to rigorously handle large amounts of information. Knowledge enlarges perspective.

## Preparation

Job seekers are often counseled to distinguish themselves. Earning an MPA degree sets one apart. The need for leaders of exceptional capability and integrity who are committed to serving their communities and improving public service organizations has never been greater.

Elaine Jarvie graduated with an EMPA degree in 2006. When she started the program she didn't know her husband's career would take them to Texas, so the degree prepared her for life's unexpected changes. Now she works for The Capital Group Companies in San Antonio, Texas. Like John Arnold, Elaine found that preparation matters before the need exists.

Recently we've had an article on our web site about students who take a shuttle for five hours to participate in BYU's EMPA program. Others have driven two or three hours each way to class. They understand that the preparation—and the sacrifice—matter. Tomorrow will be different, probably better and busier than it would have been without the degree.

For me, the perspective and preparation gained from the EMPA experience has made life richer. Which leaves me wondering, what will busy tomorrow bring?

Do you have friends who should consider adding the EMPA degree into their lives? Send them our direction! [empa.byu.edu](http://empa.byu.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "CJC".

Catherine Cooper

## OUTREACH

Publisher ..... David W. Hart  
Managing Editor ..... Vicki Okerlund  
Editor ..... Emily Smurthwaite  
Creative Editor ..... Cindy Glad  
Graphic Designer ..... Nina Whitehead  
Student Writers ..... Sara Payne, Holly Munson,  
and Andrew Marshall

*Published by the George Romney Institute of Public Management at  
Brigham Young University. © 2010 by Brigham Young University.*

## FORMER PROFESSOR GETS A TASTE OF CULTURE OVERSEAS

All she wanted was a bowl of hot cereal that was not oatmeal. Staring at shelves of foreign packaging, Gloria Wheeler reached for the box that most resembled hot cereal. When she went home and started to cook it, however, she realized she had purchased baby food.

"I'm too stingy to throw out good food, so I ate baby food for awhile," Wheeler says. "I mixed it in with the oatmeal I already had."

Wheeler, a former Romney Institute professor who retired in 2008, completed her second Fulbright grant in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, in December. Although Wheeler's primary responsibility was teaching research methods, the Mongolian university asked her to extend her grant period by two months in order to help translate and simplify accreditation documents. In addition to taking home experiences, she gained a deeper understanding of other cultures.

When she completed her first Fulbright in 1991 at the Lahore University of Management Sciences in Pakistan, all of her students spoke English. In Mongolia, however, few of them did. Wheeler was assigned a translator—who acted more like a co-teacher—to help her instruct the MBA students. Still, the language barrier did not keep Wheeler from jumping right in—to teaching or to her LDS branch's activities.

"We had an activity at the branch winter party where they did sumo wrestling but only for the women and girls," she says. "They made me do it because they thought it was really funny to watch."

Wheeler lasted only a few seconds in the ring. But what she may have lacked in wrestling, she made up for in her culinary explorations. Although Wheeler usually ate Western food, she had no problem polishing off special bread baked in molds and stacked like pyramids, mutton-stuffed pot stickers, and cups full of fermented camel's milk—typical fare served during Mongolia's Lunar New Year celebration.

On regular days, though, Wheeler cooked her own meals in her small apartment and tended to stay clear of too many foods she could not pronounce. A typical meal was similar to what she would have made in the United States, with plenty of meat, bread, fruit, and vegetables. She notes that as the global markets have expanded, so has the list of origins for her food.



"I was eating bread baked in Mongolia with flour from Russia," Wheeler says of one of her breakfasts. "I had cold cereal from the United States, jam from France, and honey from Pakistan. The margarine was Russian, the orange Chinese, and the milk Mongolian."

Wheeler appreciates the diversity that flavors the different places she visits and lives. She enjoys connecting with and learning from different cultures.

Sometimes, living abroad can provide one with more cultural exposure than is really wanted. When she was in Pakistan on her first Fulbright experience, Wheeler suffered a ruptured appendix. She went to the hospital for emergency surgery. Because the blood supply in Pakistan was known to be contaminated, the U.S. consulate nurse had to track down and send to the hospital reception area the one American woman living in Lahore who had Wheeler's blood type in case Wheeler needed a blood transfusion during the process.

"They called her at one in the morning and told her to come in," she says. "So this poor woman was sitting in the waiting room while I was in surgery, hoping I didn't need blood."

Luckily Wheeler didn't, and the surgery went well, even though she says she would not recommend a stay in a Pakistani hospital. But she does recommend that everyone have a cross-cultural experience and get to know different countries firsthand.

"For me, every so often I like to be in a place where I'm outside my comfort zone," she says. "It's important to experience new things, and it's fun to see a totally different side of a culture."

For now, though, Wheeler is content planning future explorations and soaking in Utah's beauty during her daily long walks on the Provo River Trail.

# Student News

## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT GIVES BACK

Fifteen years after working in mining to help supplement his family's income, MPA student Ariel Lara now donates back to a scholarship fund that helped scoop him out of financial uncertainty and into a land of opportunity.

"Even though it's a small donation, I know it can help," says Lara, who is supporting his wife and three children while attending the Marriott School full time. "Other people can benefit from my donation. I do not need to wait until I graduate to help."

Lara's journey to generosity was paved with bitter life lessons. As a twelve-year-old in a small Bolivian mining community, Lara made money crushing minerals. Everyone in town was expected to work in the mines, with little vision beyond the immediate horizon.

Lara's sights shifted when his family moved to a larger town. While the family still struggled to provide basic necessities, Lara's parents encouraged him to have ambition and seize opportunities.

"Everyone has dreams; I had dreams to go to college, but my reality was much different," he says.

Because Bolivia does not offer federal education loans, only wealthy families can afford college tuition. Attending BYU became an attractive option because of its price, despite the fact that Lara did not speak English and had never traveled outside of South America.

"I thought I couldn't do it," Lara recalls. "But somehow I came."

Diligent study and Lara's view of America's limitless opportunities propelled him toward his educational aspirations. After earning a bachelor's degree in political science from BYU, Lara desired to attend graduate school but knew he could not clear the daunting financial hurdle alone.

"My wife and I came to the conclusion that although we were poor, going to school was a good investment," Lara recalls. "That night we prayed and went to bed. The next day we got an email saying I received a scholarship."

The scholarship allowed Lara to attend graduate school without taking out another loan. Now a second-year MPA student emphasizing in HR and finance, Lara realizes that giving even a small donation back each year can have a similar impact on another student's life. Lara's wife, Lisa, is particularly grateful for the anonymous scholarship donors who give freely.

"It takes a lot of faith for other people to give to the school and expect stu-



dents to use the funds well," she says. "Ariel's success is directly related to all the people who give to BYU but don't know us. Hopefully we'll be able to give that way too."

In Bolivia, one U.S. dollar can feed a family for a day, Lara explains. So even small donations, added up, can have an unforeseeable impact on someone's life. Lara has felt that impact firsthand.

"You can bless others with even one dollar," he says. "Those blessings, all together, make a huge difference."

MPA (Daytime Student) Scholarship Statistics		
	2008-2009	2009-2010
Total Scholarship Dollars	\$435,584	\$291,450
# Students Enrolled	111	118
#Students Receiving Scholarship	90	82
Cost of LDS Tuition (2 Semesters)	\$9,240	\$9,980
Avg Scholarship per Student for 2 Semesters	\$4,840	\$3,554



## BATEMAN AWARD PRESENTED TO MPA STUDENT

Lindsay Johnson, a member of the graduating MPA class, was presented with one of the 2010 Merrill J. Bateman Awards, the only Marriott School-wide awards selected entirely by students.

The Merrill J. Bateman Awards are given annually to students who serve and lead within the school and community and to faculty, staff, or administrators who demonstrate outstanding efforts to enhance students' experiences.

Johnson, a second-year MPA student from Fountain Valley, California, was awarded the Outstanding Graduate Student Award.

"Each student nominee was academically qualified to receive the award, but what impressed me was the service orientation of each candidate," said Merrill J. Bateman, who delivered a keynote address at the 18 March awards ceremony.

Service was certainly a top priority for Johnson. She has served as vice president of the MPA Association (MPAA) and currently acts as co-president of Net Impact, a graduate student organization that focuses on socially responsible business, and serves as a member of the board of directors for Grantwell, a philanthropic organization

affiliated with the Marriott School.

Johnson's service has far-reaching impact, benefitting those currently in the Marriott School as well as the school's future students. In her role as the MPAA vice president of student life she worked with Tanya Harmon, MPA career services director, to establish the Sherpa Mentoring program for second-year students to assist first-year students in pursuing their professional, academic, and social endeavors. Johnson continued to participate in training the mentors, making the program a great success and setting a high precedent for the program's coming years.

Johnson also is known in the program for her spirituality in action. She uses scriptures and the words of living prophets to support her academic studies and leadership responsibilities. Though she holds many official roles in the Marriott School, Johnson leads best through her vibrant, day-to-day example—always taking the time to help students, freely sharing insights and expertise (she has a particular knack for the latest online technology), and organizing extracurricular activities for classmates.

After she graduates, Johnson plans to



pursue a career in university administration.

"I want to connect with students wherever I go," she says.

The Merrill J. Bateman Awards were created in 2002 in honor of Bateman, who served as president of BYU from 1996 to 2003 and as dean of the BYU School of Management from 1975 to 1979, before it was named the Marriott School. He has held several prominent positions in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and now serves as president of the Provo Utah Temple.

### AOY, cont.

He encouraged students to remember not only the academics but also the spiritual lessons they learned while at BYU.

Stacey graduated in 1986 with a master's in health administration. Vicki Okerlund, director of external relations for the Romney Institute, says the skills Stacey learned in school helped him achieve success and now help him to inspire students.

"He has taken what he learned here and applied it to his job," Okerlund says. "I think students are impressed with him because they see what his organization was like, and they recognize the changes he was able to bring about in such a short time."

Okerlund adds that Stacey's main focus has always been to help other people. In

the health industry, that goal is constantly met.

"We are making people live," Stacey concluded at the Administrator of the Year lecture. "I really believe there are people alive today who would not be if there were not people committed to providing world-class health care."

## ROMNEY GRADUATE HELPS ARIZONA DURING CRISIS

While many state governments are feeling the strain of an injured economy, Arizona has particularly felt the pinch on its budget. At the height of this economic concern, a 1997 Romney Institute graduate, John Arnold, was appointed to be the state's budget director.

Last fall Arnold received the position after having worked more than a decade on various state departments' budgets. His first assignment and priority was to help understand and overcome the Arizona budget crisis. Although his new position presents many challenges, Arnold says he's eager to help lift Arizona out of its financial slump.

Arnold has also had to make difficult recommendations in order to solve the budget crisis. For example, under his new plan the state would reduce welfare assistance, return state university and K-12 education funding to 2006 levels, and



make a 5 percent pay cut for state employees. The most significant proposal reforms the state Medicaid program removing more than 350,000 people from state funded health insurance. This reform alone will save more than \$1 billion. Arnold's job has compelled him to make some of the toughest budgetary decisions—decisions he says keeps him working around the clock.

Although Arnold is tasked with overcoming a crisis that affects Arizona's six and a half million residents, Scott Selin, an analyst on Arnold's team, says Arnold still knows how to focus on the individual.

"He's made an effort to connect and personally interact with everyone in the office," says Selin, a 2009 MPA graduate. "He has also found a way to keep his commitments at home while getting this important work done. It's a reflection of what a Romney Institute graduate should be."

As for where he'll end up in the future, Arnold says he can't make that decision quite yet. He's committed to helping Arizona until he's needed elsewhere.

"The state's on fire," he says. "That's like asking a fireman pouring water on a burning house what his career goal is. Right now I'm just trying to save the state."

Note: On 15 March the Arizona Legislature adopted state budgets for fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2011. These budgets largely followed the budget plan developed by Arnold's office including the one-cent sales tax referral and the Medicaid reforms. Arizona will vote on the sales tax referral on 18 May.

## — Alumni News

"When I came in we were facing the worst budget crisis ever in our state's ninety-eight-year history," he says. "The last several months we have been trying to put a plan together to fix the budget."

With the help of the state budget office, Arnold concluded that Arizona's budget crisis stemmed from a slow economy and legal restrictions that prevented the state from raising funds in a traditional way. Because of these restrictions and an uncertain outlook for the economy, Arnold and his team had to get creative.

The budget plan he helped create includes a program where the state sells its buildings and leases them back. Additionally, the plan raises funds by issuing long-term debt backed by state lottery revenues. While Arnold says debt is only a temporary solution, due to the size and timing of the current deficit it was necessary to balance this year's budget.

The plan also proposed a one-cent sales tax increase, but he says the legislature may present a hurdle in accomplishing this.

"The legislators will not do it themselves," he explains, "but I'm hoping the legislature will refer it to a special election, so it can get passed in May."

## LOCAL LEADERS GET CREATIVE WITH SMALLER BUDGETS

While individuals and businesses are feeling the effects of slimmer wallets and empty pockets, local governments are struggling to divide meager tax dollars between many worthy public areas. In these tense economic times, Romney Institute graduates working in local governments across the country are getting creative to meet this challenge.

Often the first budget cuts involve personnel: layoffs, hiring freezes, and pay cuts.

In addition to decreased spending, the City of Hickory, North Carolina, has focused heavily on redevelopment and economic activity.

"The loss of jobs in Hickory has left a lot of vacant manufacturing facilities in the city," Mike Bennett, finance director says. "We created an online inventory of the one million square feet of vacant property so potential buyers could search by height, location, age, owner, square footage, and commercial realtor."

Known as Operation No Vacancy, the program encourages development by giving money to buyers to improve these vacant buildings. Last year Alliance for Innovation awarded the city an outstanding achievement award for Operation No Vacancy and its innovation in local governance.

While the City of Hickory's progress has been ongoing enough to measure the positive impacts, many cities hope their current changes will have an impact in the future. Some city leaders who adopt creative solutions feel their job is not mere government work but one that creates a more substantial impact.

"I see my job as a remover of obstacles

and provider of tools so the real work of productivity can be enabled at the most local level," says Tom Steele, city manager of the City of West Jordan, Utah.

Steele's plan includes developing business centers that pool resources of like-minded programs to flush out unnecessary costs of each of the city's eighty programs. For example, the city's public safety and criminal justice business center will include and pool resources for fire, police, justice court, and prosecutorial services.

Steele is hopeful that this restructuring will limit about 10 percent of operational costs. Ultimately, Steele says that the city will be most efficient when management allows individual programs to function with more freedom to choose where money is allocated.

"We need to back off and allow programs to absorb the concepts and design and adapt the tools to their most effective use," Steele says.

Sometimes, however, the most effec-

tive way to keep a balanced budget is to keep a conservative budget. Sam Penrod, human resources manager for the City of San Clemente, California, says the city has been able to wade through the recession successfully because of conservative budget principles in previous years.

"We don't spend any money until it actually comes in," Penrod says.

Penrod says that valuing the opinions and roles of city employees leads to more creative solutions. The city's governance motto is to make cuts without decreasing service levels, and one way they accomplish this objective is to solicit budget ideas anonymously from employees.

"A good idea is good no matter where it comes from," Penrod says.

Ultimately, these city management employees want to ensure that their budgetary decisions have the smallest negative impact on employees in the way of layoffs and the largest positive impact on the city as a whole.



Operation No Vacancy encourages buyers to improve vacant manufacturing buildings like this one in Hickory, North Carolina.



"NATIONS AND PEOPLES CAN ONLY  
REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, THEIR  
FULL CAPACITY, BY THE APPLICATION  
OF THEIR OWN EFFORTS."

## CONTINUING STATUS BUILDS INSTITUTE'S REPUTATION

The Romney Institute just received a prestige booster when two Romney professors earned continuing status.

Professors Jeff Thompson and Rex Facer were granted this prominent distinction, equivalent to tenure at other universities, after their faculty reviews last year. Reviews were conducted at the MPA, Marriott School, and general university levels. Administrators and colleagues reviewed the professors' research accomplishments, teaching skills and evaluations, and university involvement—also known as citizenship.

"Receiving continuing status from a highly regarded institution like the Marriott School is impressive," says David Hart, director of the Romney Institute. "It is a great indication to students and alumni of our faculty's quality. That has a direct impact on the experience we

offer students. We're excited Jeff and Rex will be a part of the Romney Institute's future."

Continuing status usually allows professors to tackle a broader range of responsibilities, both on and off campus,

with the accreditation board for MPA schools: COPRA—commission on peer review and accreditation.

"My appointment on COPRA raises the brand value of the program and BYU," Facer says. "I could not have done that before being granted continuing status."

Even with additional outside opportunities, the professors are most excited to continue their research in the Romney Institute. Thompson, who has been at BYU for seven of his eleven years teaching, says he looks forward to continuing his true passion—teaching.

ward to continuing his true passion—teaching.

"Just like the people in my research who feel like their profession is their life's calling, I feel like I was born to be a teacher," Thompson says. "I come alive in the classroom."

"Continuing status is a great  
indication to students and  
alumni of our faculty's quality."

in addition to completing a regular flow of research and a full teaching load.

Facer, whose recent research on the four-day workweek has thrust him into the national spotlight, sees his new status as an opportunity to better serve students and the academic community. Last year, he accepted a position