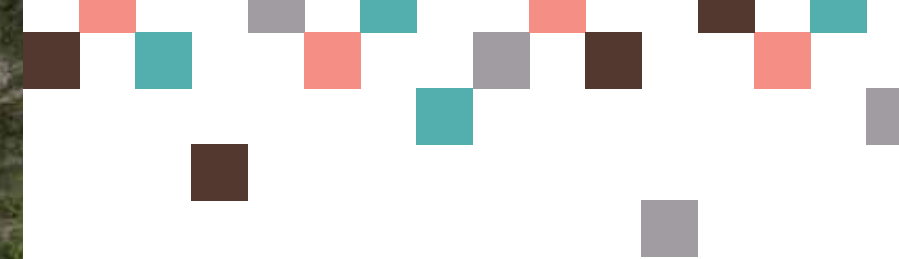


MPA

2022-23 MPA ANNUAL REPORT ■ BYU MARRIOTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS





Contents

Feature Story <i>The Secret to a Thriving Community</i>	4
Student Life	10
Faculty Spotlights	18
Alumni Updates	24
Romney Institute Support	34

All communication should be sent to:

Romney Institute of Public Service and Ethics
BYU Marriott School of Business
760 Tanner Building
Provo, UT 84602

PHONE: (801) 422-4221 **EMAIL:** mpaalumni@byu.edu

This report is published by BYU Marriott's George W. Romney Institute of Public Service and Ethics with help from the BYU Marriott Marketing, Communications, and Technology Office and BYU Brand & Creative. ©2023 by Brigham Young University. All rights reserved.

◀ *To increase opportunities for leadership and professional development, MPA students attended the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Annual Conference held in September 2022 in Columbus, Ohio.*

Front cover: MPA students and alumni take time to serve in the community.

MPA 2022-23 Year at a Glance



August

A Flood of Service

As the service portion of new student orientation, MPA students and faculty help clean up after a flash flood left three feet of water on streets in Moab, Utah.

November

Maintaining Relationships

MPA director Robert Christensen joins alumni for breakfast during a recruiting trip to BYU-Idaho.



December

A Needed Break-Fast

To prepare students for finals, a special fast is held followed by a hearty breakfast to lift everyone's spirits.



January

Learning from the Best

Pre-PhD students attend a lecture by Rosemary O'Leary, 2023 Cornia Lecture Series Award recipient.



March

Working Together

Leaders from the Roble Foundation and the Romney Institute meet to discuss opportunities for future collaboration.

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL



September

Good Clean Fun

Second-year MPA students show their true-blue spirit as they slide through foam at the program's annual suds activity.

October

Discovering New Friends

Students Dallas Bates, Rachael Feil, and Camille and Jacob Hill strengthen their relationships by taking a break from classes to explore a corn maze.



February

Trip to the Dome

Students from the program's public policy process course visit the Utah State Capitol during the 2023 legislative session.

April

Graduating in Style

Members of the EMPA Class of 2023 celebrate graduation with a memorable photo shoot.





THE SECRET TO A THRIVING COMMUNITY

Local Government Professionals Making an iMPact

BY LENA M. PRIMOSCH

When the young, aristocratic French lawyer Alexis de Tocqueville stepped onto the soil of the American colonies in 1831, he was struck by what he found: local governments at work. “A nation may establish a system of free government,” he wrote in his subsequent book, *Democracy in America*, “but without the spirit of municipal institutions it cannot have the spirit of liberty.” At the town level, he observed citizens working together in thriving communities. Here, he discovered, was the heart of American democracy.

For more than 50 years, the BYU Marriott MPA program has been breathing life into America’s democracy by training exceptional local government professionals. The curriculum is renowned

for being practical, rigorous, and experiential, and students leave prepared to tackle all aspects of local government, including budgeting, planning, human resources, and management. **Robert Christensen**, the Romney Institute’s director, got his start in local government at Orem City Attorney’s Office. Christensen is a strong supporter of the local government track, and MPA professors and staff are committed to training students to give exceptional service in their communities. “The emphasis gives students the opportunity to feel grounded in their community and not only to personally build up Zion in their own neighborhood, town, or city but also to coordinate and work with others to collectively make an impact,” says MPA assistant professor **Travis B. Ruddle**.



Here's how eight alumni have put their MPAs to work in their local governments, reflecting the strength of the program through their dedicated and resourceful service.

RELYING ON A GREAT TEAM



Only months after her 2021 graduation from the MPA program, **Moira Facer** found herself in a unique situation: deciding how to allocate a substantial amount of funds. Her employer—the vibrant waterfront city of Norfolk,

Virginia—was overburdened by the COVID-19 pandemic, and money from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 promised relief. Determined to find ways that the funds could revitalize the city and boost the community, Facer and her colleagues pushed through remote work settings and unpredictable circumstances to create a useful set of recommendations.

As one of the city's budget and policy analysts, Facer also headed an initiative to educate the citizens of Norfolk about the funds and discover how they would like them to be invested. She says that “while the process was difficult, we received the greatest response for budget-related public engagement that anyone could remember, which was very exciting.” The final investment plan has put the funds to work transforming two city parks, constructing a floodwall, supporting local nonprofits, and providing gap financing for affordable housing, among other projects.

“This project defined much of my first year of working for local government,” Facer says. “My time in the MPA program set me up to be a successful, involved team member and collaborate with folks in all sorts of different situations.”

DIVERTING A CRISIS



In the spring of 1983, Salt Lake City was on the verge of a major disaster. Record-setting snowpack was melting quickly, and runoff infrastructure was overwhelmed. But the city's chief administrative officer, 1972 MPA graduate **Albert E.**

Haines, was ready. As early as September of the previous year, he had been preparing—thanks to spiritual direction—to mitigate and manage “the incredibly stressful and amazing experience” of the floods that

“Service brings people together. I think that’s really an important piece of an MPA degree: we should be bringing people together.”

—KENA JO MATHEWS

swept through the city that spring. “At almost every turn where I didn’t have answers, there was clear communication from on high!” Haines recalls.

By directing emergency management efforts during the flooding, Haines diverted citywide disasters—sometimes literally. In one case, to cope with the flooding of City Creek, more than 10,000 volunteers helped sandbag a man-made river that flowed through downtown streets for thirteen days.

Haines used to think of his career successes as the tangible results, such as improving transportation, managing crises, and developing systems. “Now,” he says, “I think my contribution was more in the relationships sphere: those moments when I was fortunate to engage in compassionate service with individuals who really cared, listened, and served.” Similarly, Haines has found that the MPA program has infused his career with meaning: “I have come to appreciate the value of the program as an important and transferable element of my wonderfully fulfilling career experiences.”

ENABLING OTHERS TO SERVE



When 2004 EMPA graduate **Kena Jo Mathews** heard about plans to build an all-abilities playground in Orem, Utah, in 2016, she jumped at the opportunity to get involved. The project resonated deeply with her because she has an autistic

niece. After Mathews reached out to the city to see how her employer, Habitat for Humanity, could help, she was named the project's volunteer coordinator. Mathews spent the next several months preparing for



PHOTOS (PREVIOUS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE CITIES OF ONTARIO, OREGON; HURST, TEXAS; MESA, ARIZONA; AND SOUTH JORDAN, UTAH

the project. When everything was ready, she helped manage the more than 4,500 volunteers who built the playground in only seven days.

“This playground is amazing. It is so well loved and so well used even now,” she says. “It makes me smile every time I drive by and see how many children of all abilities in our community are able to play and be kids.”

After spending more than twenty years in the nonprofit sector, Mathews is now the community services manager for the city of Orem, largely due to the success of the playground project. In her new role, she works closely with nonprofit organizations to run projects for residents in need. This position allows her to blend the nonprofit and local government sectors—something the EMPA program prepared her well for—and do something that she loves in a new way. “Service brings people together,” she says. “I think that’s really an important piece of an MPA degree: we should be bringing people together.” Mathews is still involved with the playground, managing volunteers at quarterly cleanups.

MAKING HUMBLE CONNECTIONS

Clayton Fulton, a 2008 MPA graduate, grew up working for the small construction company his father owned and operated. In addition to learning the trade,



Fulton interacted and worked with homeowners, builders, and subcontractors, which required him to connect with people from various backgrounds and education levels. Now, as assistant city manager of Hurst, Texas, he uses those communication skills in what he calls a “humble, blue-collar approach” to interact with city departments and citizens who come into city hall.

But most of Fulton's work happens behind the curtain. “I ensure that finances are well managed, the computers work, and data is safe,” he says. “And we continue to keep the water clean and the streets clear.” His quiet but important work allows other departments to focus on serving the community. Fulton also strives to bring departments that don't directly serve the community into alignment with the city council's strategic priorities, helping employees understand how they, too, impact citizens every day.

“Working for local government isn't easy. It takes grit, tact, and wisdom,” Fulton says. “The foundation I built while attending BYU allows me to engage in different methods with diverse audiences where solutions may not be simple. I rely upon divine guidance when applying the principles I learned through the MPA program.”

LEADING BY FAITH



Most students assume their career-defining moment will come in the years that follow graduation, but for 2003 graduate **Peni Basalusalu**, that moment happened at an MPA event during his first year in the program. “The

program sent a few of us to an ICMA [International City/County Management Association] conference held in Philadelphia,” Basalusalu says. “There, via the BYU alumni dinner, I met the city manager of Manteca, California. He accepted my request for him to be my mentor.”

Fast forward more than 20 years, and Basalusalu now works for the city of Manteca as deputy director of public works. And his mentor? He’s retired but he lives close by, and Basalusalu still relies on him for guidance.

Basalusalu credits the MPA program for much more than introducing him to his career-long mentor and leading him to his current position. His degree is a daily reminder that he can do hard things, and it has laid the foundation for his faith-based leadership approach in his work. “[My MPA] helps me stay grounded and humble,” he says. “It is how people decide to use [their MPA] that is impactful.”

FOCUSING ON PEOPLE



Erin Wells, a 2013 graduate from the MPA program, takes seriously BYU’s charge to “go forth to serve,” particularly in her current role as city administrator for Highland City, Utah. Her personal work philosophy is to make the city a

great place to live and work. “I want the residents of Highland to love their hometown as much as I loved my hometown as a child,” says Wells, a native of Tooele, Utah, “and I want the employees at Highland City to love the organization they work for.”

Since becoming city administrator in November 2022, Wells has refined the budget, rallied buy-in across staff and elected officials, and developed a team environment in which each employee knows they are valued. “Keeping this bigger perspective [of serving] helps me feel fulfilled,” she says.

Wells thanks the MPA program for much of her success. While studying in the Romney Institute, she interned for Highland City, which set her on the path to become city administrator. The program also



“I think the MPA program best exemplifies ‘Enter to learn; go forth to serve.’ It is a mindset and dedication that has affected all I do and how I serve.”

—BRYAN MONTGOMERY

taught her important people-based skills she uses “constantly” and helped her create her work philosophy. She shares, “[In the MPA,] you get the chance to interact with phenomenal professors and dedicated students and to take the first steps in learning how to truly make a difference in the world.” And in one city at least, Wells is making an important difference.

BUDGETING BEHIND THE SCENES



Kelly Pfof, a 2006 graduate, began the MPA program with every intention of working with nonprofits. But after a summer internship with the city of Orem, Utah, she found the behind-the-scenes aspect of the job so rewarding that she

pursued local government instead. That decision eventually led her to her current position as management and budget director for Gilbert, Arizona, where she has made her biggest backstage contribution yet.

Long before *pandemic* became a buzzword, Pfof led Gilbert to adopt a conservative budget in anticipation of an upcoming economic slowdown. So when COVID-19 hit, the city was prepared. “Gilbert didn’t have to do emergency budget cuts,” Pfof says. “Our budget was still balanced.” When it came time to revisit the budget, Pfof’s team was ready again, this time with metrics that helped them respond to changing data from pandemic-related uncertainties.

Pfof considers the budget’s success during the pandemic to be one of her greatest accomplishments. The city thinks so too: Pfof was named Gilbert’s Employee of the Year in 2021. “My MPA degree has opened doors to career opportunities that I never expected for myself,” she says. “As a girl from small-town Idaho, I would never have imagined myself helping a town of 280,000 residents manage a \$2 billion budget. And I love it.”

GOING FORTH TO SERVE



More than 20 years ago, **Bryan Montgomery** (MPA 1994) boarded a plane to Guadalajara, Mexico—but not to sample the local cuisine or snap photos of colonial architecture. Traveling in partnership with the ICMA, he was on a volunteer under-

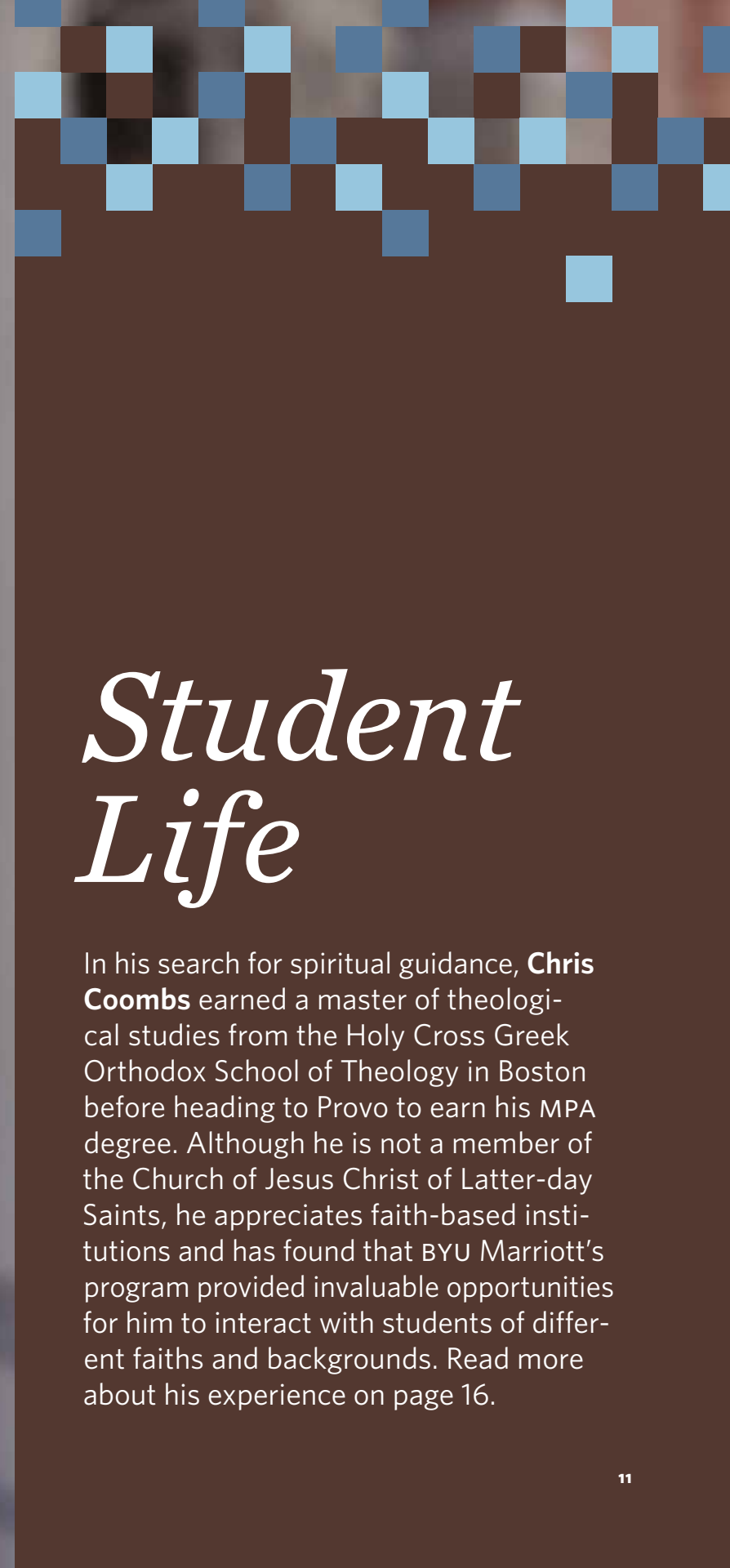
taking to consult with and educate local leaders on how to professionalize their governments. “The principles of good government bless the lives of people,” he says. “I wanted to be a part of the big effort to improve the systems of government closest to and most needed by the people.”

That was the first of more than 25 trips that have led him across Mexico and the United States and have brought him to Honduras, Colombia, and Tanzania. As city manager of Indio, California, he is well-respected for his service and applies the principles he teaches to his everyday work. In 2015 he was named Volunteer of the Year by the Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance. “These volunteer trips are part of giving back and fulfilling my calling as a public servant,” he says.

Montgomery attributes “the spirit of service” at BYU to leading him to volunteer: “I think the MPA program best exemplifies ‘Enter to learn; go forth to serve.’ It is a mindset and dedication that has affected all I do and how I serve. I feel honored to be a BYU MPA alum.”

These eight women and men represent a larger community of MPA alumni who are serving in and impacting their local governments in 49 states and more than 40 countries. Thanks to the solid foundation they gained at the Romney Institute, these dedicated alums are fostering the collaborative, citizen-involved government that de Tocqueville admired nearly two hundred years ago.

PHOTOS (TOP TO BOTTOM) USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE CITIES OF FATE, TEXAS, AND GLENDALE, ARIZONA



Student Life

In his search for spiritual guidance, **Chris Coombs** earned a master of theological studies from the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Boston before heading to Provo to earn his MPA degree. Although he is not a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he appreciates faith-based institutions and has found that BYU Marriott's program provided invaluable opportunities for him to interact with students of different faiths and backgrounds. Read more about his experience on page 16.

Student Report

Class of 2022-23

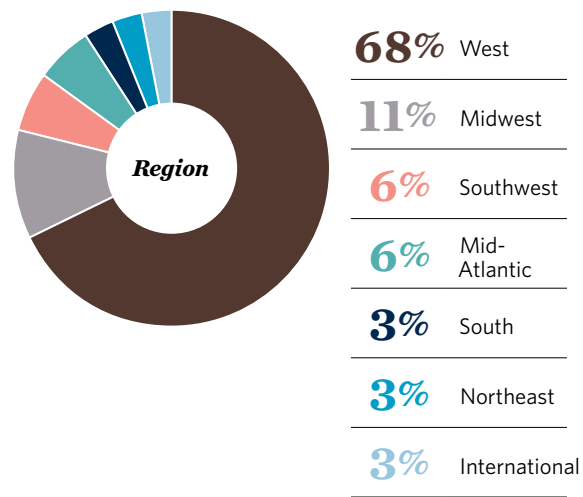
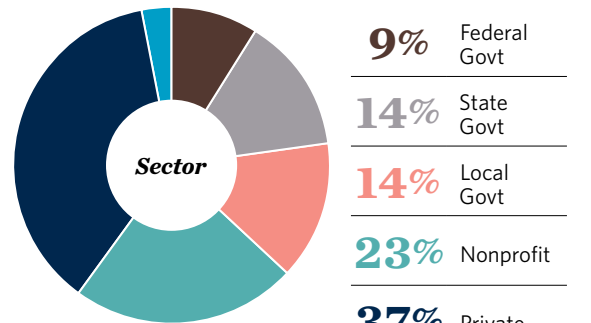
CATEGORY	MPA	EMPA
Students enrolled	97	89
Female	59%	65%
Married	47%	79%
International	30%	0%
Minority	11%	13%
Bilingual	59%	48%
Served mission	61%	40%
Average age	29	42
Average GPA	3.80	3.74

International Countries Represented

Cambodia	New Zealand
Colombia	Papua New Guinea
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Peru
Ecuador	Philippines
Fiji	Samoa
Ghana	South Africa
Guatemala	Tonga
India	Uganda
Mexico	United States
Mongolia	Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Job Placement— Graduation Year 2022

CLASS OF 2022	MPA
Average salary	\$57,839
Placed by 3 months after graduation	88%
Internship converted to job	20%



Time, Treasure, and Talents

As a mother of four, **Liz Mumford** knows her way around the school system. Now, as a student in the executive MPA program and an elected official on the Davis Board of Education, Mumford is passionate about sharing her time and talents with the causes she believes in.

Originally from Davis County, Utah, Mumford traveled extensively while growing up. By broadening her physical horizons, she gained a global perspective that influenced her future life and career choices. After moving back to Utah with her family, Mumford started teaching part-time while her kids were in school.

While working at the school her children attended, Mumford noticed a problem. “I saw a disparity between the policymaking that was happening and the actual challenges teachers were talking about in the faculty room,” she says. “I felt like it was time for somebody who had children in school to step up. So in 2015 I decided to run for public office.”

Mumford describes the experience of working as her own campaign manager as a crash course in grassroots work. “I had never run for office or been involved in politics before,” she says. “I just figured it out.” Mumford knocked doors, canvassed neighborhoods for votes, and passed out flyers.

“Being elected was an emotional experience after putting in work like that. I have to give my family and friends so much credit,” Mumford says. “My husband was my right-hand man, and my kids put themselves out there while we campaigned.”

Her background in education and her time spent in her children’s schools allow Mumford to design policies with the firsthand knowledge of how they affect students. With the Davis School District team, Mumford helped create the Catalyst Center—a program focused on teaching technology skills to kids—and developed teen centers to support unhoused youth and other teenagers in challenging economic situations. “I’m focused on bettering students’ education and supporting families,” Mumford explains.

While entrenched in supporting the education of others, Mumford decided to further her own education and go back to school. “I was at a point where



I wanted to redefine what the next part of my life looked like, and I felt like the MPA would be an intersection of my different interests,” Mumford says.

She explains that coming back to school as an older student has helped her appreciate her studies in a different way than she did as an undergraduate. “Sometimes I’m supposed to be at a board meeting for the school district the same night as class,” she says. “Or I have to be at a public hearing, and I’ll need to Zoom in to a lecture. The program accommodates for that.”

Additionally, Mumford’s cohort has had a tremendous impact on her experience in the MPA program. “The team that I’m on is unique because one of the members works at the university, one is in the military, one manages a public works department in the state of Utah, one manages a nonprofit organization, and then I have experience as an elected official,” Mumford details. She describes the group as an amazing cohesion of ideas and different perspectives that has expanded her professional network and her outlook.

“I truly believe that every single person can dedicate their time, talents, or treasure to an organization they believe in,” Mumford says. “Even if you’re a student, you have some experience or passion you can share.”

Second-Year MPA Student Receives Buckwalter Award



William Livingston was named the 2022 Buckwalter Internship Award recipient by the MPA program. Livingston received official recognition—along with the \$1,500 award—during the program’s Alumni of the Year

dinner on November 10, 2022.

A 2023 graduate, Livingston interned with the city of Alpine in the summer of 2022. He was tasked with creating a full financial analysis for the city that covered the past 20 years. Using that analysis, Livingston developed a forward-facing plan for the financial future of the city. His work helped his colleagues understand how the city’s financial situation has evolved over the years and how to prepare for the future.

“William made great contributions to our city through his work. His value as an intern was more than we could have asked for,” says Carla Merrill, mayor of Alpine.

The Alpine city government was so impressed that Livingston was invited to continue working for the city after his internship.

The MPA awards committee also named two honorable mentions for the award: **Lindsay Harper** and **Julienne Boyce Smith**. Harper worked with the G20 Interfaith Forum Association, and Smith worked as a finance associate for Utah County. They each received a \$750 award and were recognized for the work done with their respective organizations.

The award is named after **Doyle W. Buckwalter**, former associate director and internship coordinator of the Romney Institute, and it honors students who perform exemplary work during their time as interns.

Making It Happen

Lindsay Bohn

doesn’t wait for opportunities—she makes them happen.

Bohn is this year’s recipient of the Garth N. Jones Writing Award for her essay on her lifelong commitment to service.

When Bohn heard about the urgent needs in Ukraine after the country was invaded, she wanted to help. She connected with a nonprofit, and within a few weeks she was on a plane to Poland with supplies and high hopes.



But an emergency appendectomy ended her trip abruptly. Bohn decided that this wouldn’t be the end of her experience. “I hadn’t done what I wanted to do and knew more was needed.” Bohn received her appendectomy and then returned to Ukraine in November.

Bohn also works with her family’s nonprofit foundation aimed at helping young children develop their musical talents and interests. After graduation she plans to continue her work there and has already worked on several fundraising campaigns.

Bohn has big plans for the future. “The thing is, if we don’t make it happen—help those in need, reach out to others, raise money for good causes—no one is going to make it happen,” she says. “So I’m determined to make it happen.”

Honoring the Past by Looking Forward



For **Sue Mika**, the executive MPA program is more than just a program—it’s a connection to someone she loves and respects: **George W. Romney**. While MPA students will recognize Romney as the namesake for the institute that hosts their program, Mika called him grandfather.

George W. Romney impressed upon Mika the importance of honoring the family name that they shared. Romney’s mother died while he was still attending high school. As a young man, Romney visited his mother’s grave with his father and promised his father that he would never do anything to dishonor their family name.

This story resonates deeply with Mika. “Now that I’m connected to this program, I hold that same resolution in wanting to honor the Romney name through service,” she says. Mika graduated from BYU in 1984 with a bachelor’s

degree in finance, and her grandparents’ example inspired her to work toward an additional degree.

Before returning to BYU as an MPA student, Mika never gave much thought to the BYU aim of becoming a lifelong learner. Now that she’s recently graduated from BYU once again, Mika found she has a new love for learning. “Because of the work I’ve done in my classes, I came away with a renewed sense of confidence and energy,” Mika says. “These feelings reaffirmed to me that my education will continue long after my time here at BYU.”

Mika understands that being a lifelong learner is challenging but ultimately rewarding. “It’s easy for us to feel comfortable with where we’re at in life,” she says. “But we learn and grow best by doing those things that make us uncomfortable.”

Mika isn’t alone in her desire to step outside of her comfort zone. Many of her classmates in the EMPA program feel the same.

“There’s a wide range of people, backgrounds, and goals. We have individuals in the EMPA program who work in the healthcare department, some who work at BYU, some who are single parents,” says Mika. “The students come from different stages of life, and that motivated and excited me.” Her classmates’ unique perspectives made the classroom

experience much more meaningful. “I felt inspired by the other students as they taught me and opened my eyes to different things that I couldn’t learn on my own.”

Mika’s professors also contributed to the excellent learning environment. “I think I was older than every professor I had,” she says, laughing. “I’m grateful for all of them. Their enthusiasm was infectious.” Mika left every class infused with the excitement that her professors expressed for the material they taught.

Since graduation, Mika is using her newly acquired skills and knowledge alongside her husband in their efforts to serve. “There’s more for us to accomplish together. My husband, Ron, focuses on education opportunities both internationally and in our own country,” she says. In the past, the couple helped construct schoolhouses in both Zambia and Tanzania. “I’d love to participate more fully in these endeavors,” she shares.

Additionally, Mika wants to serve her family and cherish her experiences as a grandmother. Mika understands the importance of these relationships, and she wants to cultivate a special connection with all of her grandchildren. She hopes to instill in each of them the joy of learning and serving, just as her grandfather did in her.

An Education Led by Intuition

Chris Coombs enjoys charting his own course. After working for politicians in Utah and studying theology in Boston, Coombs followed his intuition to the MPA program at BYU Marriott.

A Utah native, Coombs received bachelor's degrees in history and political science from the University of Utah in 2017. While earning his undergraduate degrees, Coombs interned for the offices of various politicians, including Senator Orrin G. Hatch, Attorney General Sean Reyes, and Representative Brad Wilson.

After graduating, Coombs felt inspired to study theology. He moved to Boston and attended a two-year program at the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Coombs was led there because of an academic interest, but he was also seeking spiritual guidance in discerning the next steps of his life. After receiving his master of theological studies in 2019, Coombs returned to Salt Lake City and began working for the Utah Republican Party.

While he was working in the world of politics, Coombs contemplated the possibility of going back to school for his MPA. "I didn't want to go to the same university I had already earned a degree from; I wanted to branch out," he says. Though not a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Coombs felt that BYU's curriculum matched his career and educational aspirations, so he acted on his impression,

completed an application, and entered the program in 2021.

"I knew other people who weren't members who had enjoyed their experience at BYU. It seemed like an adventure, and so I said, 'Why not?'" Coombs explains. Coming from a Greek Orthodox background, Coombs appreciates faith-based institutions. BYU provided him with eye-opening experiences, allowing him to interact with students of different faiths and backgrounds.

For Coombs, the environment at BYU Marriott was critical to his learning. "The students were driven, put together, kind, and intelligent, which made for a vibrant learning environment," he says. And this environment, Coombs observes, also created a unique camaraderie among students.

In addition, the structure of the program sparks collaboration and friendship between classmates. "You spend hours with people who you never thought you would interact with," Coombs says. "If it wasn't for the MPA program grouping us together, we might never have met and connected."

Coombs also benefited considerably from the professors in his program. "The professors weren't just there to do a job," he says, noting that his professors cared deeply about the success of each student in addition to the success of the group. Some professors reached out to Coombs to check up on him, and other professors

recognized when they needed to adapt the material to better suit the needs of the class.

While Coombs isn't sure what he wants to do now that he has graduated, he knows that his time in the MPA program has opened doors. In the past, his dream job was to be a chief of staff, but now Coombs is considering working in local government. He also hasn't ruled out law school just yet.

When it comes to the uncertainties of the future, Coombs emphasizes the importance of listening to your inner voice. "I think you need to chart your own course in life. At the end of the day, nobody knows you better than you," he explains. "You might not know how things will turn out, but that's what makes life so special. You need to take those risks."



Far from Home

Originally from the lush islands of Tonga, **Malissa Fifita** believes there are multiple pathways to personal success. A second-year student in the MPA program, Fifita navigates life's ever-changing roads by drawing strength from her family, her culture, and her determination to serve others.



Fifita graduated from BYU-Hawaii with a degree in political science. "My only goal was finishing my undergrad and going to law school," she says. But a mentor who held degrees in both law and public administration nudged Fifita in a different direction.

"Being around people—it's my strength. It's my comfortable area," Fifita says. She realized that an MPA would allow her to tap into both her people skills and her problem-solving skills. "It's not good to say a problem is fun," Fifita shares, "but solving the problem is fun."

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic meant that the classes would probably be virtual, Fifita applied for and was accepted to BYU Marriott's MPA program.

But plans changed when Fifita became pregnant, and her extended family moved to California. Newly graduated from BYU-Hawaii, Fifita and her husband also decided to move to California and defer the MPA program. Finding a job was extremely difficult for Fifita, but she kept an open mind and eventually landed an essential worker position at ChanceLight Education, a school for students ages 5 to 21 with autism disorders, special needs, and behavior challenges.

"I do not have any background in dealing with autism or working with special-needs kids," she says. "Honestly, I just went in with the mindset that we needed money." However, within two weeks she realized she was in love with her job. "I was excited every morning to go to work," she recalls. "I learned more from the students than they did from me."



After a year and a half, Fifita closed out her chapter at ChanceLight, trading the sea for snowcapped peaks. Now immersed in the MPA program, she finds that her positivity and her love for people make her feel right at home. "The positive nature of the program drew me in," she says. "What I love about the program is the support that we have from our professors, the relationships we have with our cohort, and the people I'm around."

As she adjusts to school, stress, and snow, Fifita keeps her Tongan heritage in her heart by tucking a flower behind her ear each day. "This is like our sun," Fifita says of her flower. "We wear it in our hair. It's something I identify with. It's in our culture."

Fifita misses her family in Tonga and in California, but her husband and daughter motivate her to work hard. "I go home and open the door, and the first thing I see is my daughter, and she's jumping and calling 'Mommy,'" Fifita says. "I'm reenergized."

Although Fifita feels overwhelmed and exhausted at times, her husband cheers her on. "We didn't leave California to come this far just for you to give up," he reminds her. "You can do this."

Fifita agrees and adds to his sentiment: "We can do it. We are made for greater things."

And she hasn't given up on going to law school after her MPA degree is completed. "It's still a dream," she says. "It's still a goal." Fifita knows that there are multiple pathways to personal success, and her MPA will pave the way forward.



Faculty Spotlights

When he was 12 years old, **Travis Ruddle** found a copy of The Book of Mormon on a dusty shelf at his grandfather's house. Raised a Methodist, he recognized the book as scripture and began reading it. However, it wasn't until he was a freshman at the University of Oklahoma several years later that he walked into a Latter-day Saint institute building on campus to find out more. That decision led to his conversion and eventually to his current position as an assistant professor at the Romney Institute. Read about his journey on page 23.

Faculty Involvement

Publications & Citizenship Activities

Brad Agle

- Editorial board member, *Business Ethics Quarterly*
- Steering committee, APPE Summit for Directors of Ethics Centers

Robert Christensen

- Coauthor, “A Systematic Literature Review of City Competitiveness: A 30-Year Assessment and Future Agenda for Public Administration,” *Public Management Review*
- Incoming president, Public Management Research Association (PMRA)

Liz Dixon

- Honoree, BYU Adjunct Faculty of the Year Teaching Excellence Award 2022
- Coauthor, *Management Communication* textbook with Kurt Sandholtz

Dan Heist

- Recipient, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation \$750,000 grant for the *National Study on Donor Advised Funds*
- Coauthor, “Tubs, Tanks, and Towers: Donor Strategies for Donor-Advised Funds Giving,” *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*

David Matkin

- Coauthor, “Energy Efficiency Expenditures in Cities with Municipal-Owned Utilities,” *Chinese Public Administration Review*
- Executive committee (2023–26), Association for Budgeting & Financial Management (ABFM)

Aaron Miller

- Teaching professor, BYU Marriott MPA program
- Producer and interviewer, published *How to Help* podcast (eight episodes): Habitat for Humanity International CEO Jonathan Reckford, former director of the Office of Government Ethics Walter Shaub, CEO of the Lever for Change Foundation Dr. Cecilia Conrad, and CEO of the West Africa AIDS Foundation Dr. Naa Vanderpuye-Donton

Brad Owens

- Honoree, Mid-Career Standout Scholar Award from the Network of Leadership Scholars of the Academy of Management
- Coauthor, “Relationship-Specific (Dyadic) Humility: How Your Humility Predicts My Psychological Safety and Performance,” *Journal of Applied Psychology*

Travis Ruddle

- Coauthor, “Examining the Efficacy of Accountability Systems in Preventing Nonprofit Misconduct: A Look Beyond Financial Fraud,” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*
- Nominations committee member, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action

Kurt Sandholtz

- Honoree, Fulbright Senior Scholar award for six-month sabbatical in Madrid, Spain
- Course designer, “Three Perspectives on Innovation,” Madrid Polytechnic University

Chris Silvia

- Coauthor, “The Enduring Role of Sector: Citizen Preferences in Mixed Markets,” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* with Eva Witesman and Curtis Child
- Editorial board member, *Public Administration Review*

Jeff Thompson

- Coauthor, “The Dynamics of Work Orientations: An Updated Typology and Agenda for the Study of Jobs, Careers, and Callings,” *Academy of Management Annals*
- Project manager, Christ-Centered Leader Model for BYU

Breck Wightman

- Coauthor, “Job Vacancy and Organizational Performance: Are Senior Managers or Street-Level Bureaucrats Missed Most?” *Public Administration Review*
- Honoree, Best paper award from the Academy of Management for “Holding Out For a Hero: Linking Hiring Duration and Managerial Fit”

Eva Witesman

- Academic director, Ballard Center for Social Impact
- Full professor, BYU Marriott MPA program

Liz the Wiz



As a young girl Liz Dixon marveled at the floor-to-ceiling books that lined the office of her father—a professor of political science at a small liberal arts college. “Have you read all these books?” she asked him. “I mean, *all* these books?” Her father replied: “All of them. Twice.”

Dixon’s father has been close to her heart throughout her career and especially this past year, when she became an associate professor in the Romney Institute. Over the last 22 years, Dixon’s impact has rippled through many corners of the Tanner Building, where she has taught as an adjunct professor, coached case-competition teams, directed a writing center within the Romney Institute, and served on the BYU Marriott Leadership Council. This new appointment as associate professor allows Dixon to dive even deeper into her favorite academic pastime: helping people become Christlike communicators.

Dixon discovered her passion for clear, purposeful communication early in her career as a healthcare consultant. As she distilled complex concepts and data to present to large audiences, she realized she “could disarm people and help them feel comfortable.”

One healthcare client called her “Liz the Wiz” because of her almost magical ability to connect with even the toughest of audiences. Dixon credits her father for this skill. “I learned from my dad that instead of getting defensive or shrinking, I could say, ‘Show me what you mean,’” she explains.

Since 2001, Dixon has generously shared her expertise with the BYU Marriott community. “I love watching the transformation as people who were scared to death become completely comfortable as presenters and communicators,” she says.

In her new role, Dixon oversees the curriculum and the professors of M COM 320: Management Communication—a required

course for all students across the business school. She embraces this opportunity to further the vision, mission, and values of BYU Marriott by training students in ethical communication. “In the end, your discipleship comes down to how you interact with other people,” she says. “In M COM 320, we teach a secular subject bathed in the light of the gospel. I feel so passionate about making sure that every student who takes the course feels that.”

Dixon is also eager to equip future public servants with the unique communication skills they need. “The public is a nebulous, big mass of many different stakeholders, most of whom have competing interests,” she explains. “Public servants must choose language that will connect with different audiences and competing groups.”

Whether she’s commanding a large audience, mentoring individual students, or fine-tuning course curriculum, “Liz the Wiz” is committed to helping students become Christlike communicators.

Dixon’s three children are now grown, but her youngest child, a student at BYU Marriott, echoes Dixon’s own words when she drops by the office and asks her mom, “Have you really read all these books?” Dixon’s answer is the same as her father’s. But reading books twice is not the only way that Dixon carries on her father’s legacy. “He helped people find their potential, and that brought him joy,” Dixon says. “And that’s the best part of my job.”

The Path to Public Service



PhD in public policy analysis and management.

In 1985, Walters returned to BYU as the director for the Social Science Computing Center within the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences. After four years, he joined the MPA program and eventually served as its director.

Toward the end of his career, Walter took on new challenges beyond the BYU community. As a visiting professor at Rotterdam University, Walters instructed students from all over the world. He visited the school two or three times a year, helping graduate students from developing countries understand their potential to impact their own communities.

Walters's accomplishments extend beyond the academic world. He worked with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations, and the Utah State Tax Commission.

Gary Cornia, former dean of BYU Marriott, believes that Walters's work around the world is unmatched among BYU faculty. "Larry's behavior and expectations radiated the principles he taught. Larry's presence made others better," Cornia says.

To those looking for a career in public service, Walters hopes they understand what the job is worth. "You'll be able to make a living and raise a family, but you won't be wealthy," he says. "But you will go home at night and say it was a good day; my work made a difference in people's lives."

Larry Walters discovered early in his life that serving others brought him great joy. He turned that love into a fulfilling career, and now, as an emeritus faculty member of the MPA program, Walters can see how his love of public service has inspired others and made the world a better place.

Walters was born in Northern California and grew up in the South Bay. He became a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the age of 17, and after graduating high school, he came to BYU for his freshman year. He then served a mission in Brazil and, upon returning, married his wife, Carol.

As a newlywed, Walters was more focused on raising a family than finishing school. He was working as the manager of a small grocery store in Ferron, Utah, when he noticed a public works job opening in the city. Because of the pay increase it would give him, he applied. He landed the job and took on whatever needed to be done for the city: plowing snow, digging

graves, reading water meters, and installing water lines. "I loved being able to go home each night and name the people who were better off because of what I did," he says. "I couldn't picture a career more satisfying than that."

After working in Ferron for two years, Walters and his family moved to Salem, Utah, where he worked as the city manager. While there, he realized that if he wanted to pursue a stable career in city management, he needed to further his education. Returning to school would be a challenge because Walters and his wife already had five children, but he knew that continuing his education was the right decision.

Walters went back to BYU, expecting to finish his bachelor's degree and then study in BYU Marriott's MPA program. However, Walters fell in love with statistical analysis, prompting him to major in public policy analysis. After graduating from BYU in 1980 with his bachelor's degree, Walters studied at the University of Philadelphia, where he received a

Instituting Religion

At the corner of Lindsey Street and Elm Avenue in Norman, Oklahoma, sits an institute of religion building. **Travis Ruddle**, an undergraduate student at University of Oklahoma, had seen the building often during his first few weeks at school but had hardly acknowledged it. However, in the summer of 2009, Ruddle diverted from his normal walk across campus and entered the inconspicuous one-story building. That small detour led Ruddle into a new life and a new path that would one day lead to teaching in the MPA program at BYU Marriott.

Raised in a Methodist home in rural Oklahoma, Ruddle knew little about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His first introduction to the Church came when his family traveled to southwest Missouri after the death of his grandfather. As they sorted through his grandfather's belongings, 12-year-old Ruddle found a copy of the Book of Mormon on a dusty bookshelf.

"I was fascinated by the book because it looked like scripture," Ruddle says. "When I picked up that blue book, it felt like I should know about it. When I started reading, I couldn't put it down. Something about it spoke to my 12-year-old mind."

Ruddle remained active in his Methodist congregation, but he kept a copy of the Book of Mormon in his backpack and carried it with him everywhere he went. It wasn't until early in his freshman year of college that his unplanned visit to the institute building provided opportunity for further study.

"I was supposed to be going to class, but instead I just walked right into the institute building," Ruddle says. "I had no game plan to do so, and I had no blueprint in my mind about what to do next—I just walked in."

Institute leaders and students immediately embraced Ruddle, even helping him enroll in a Doctrine and Covenants class. A few months and some long-needed missionary lessons later, Ruddle was baptized.

Ruddle went on to earn three degrees from the University of Oklahoma: a bachelor's degree in political science, a master's degree in public administration, and a doctoral degree in political science. During his PhD program, Ruddle worked as a graduate teaching



assistant and received a prestigious Boren fellowship. Ruddle's research is focused on unethical behavior and organizational reputation in the nonprofit sector.

After graduating with his PhD in early 2022, Ruddle made the jump to BYU Marriott, where his faith aligns with his work more than ever. He now works as an assistant professor in the MPA program. He teaches courses on local government, nonprofit organizations, and ethical behavior.

Ruddle's research and teaching on organizational ethics align with BYU Marriott's mission to develop leaders of faith and character by giving students the practical tools necessary to promote ethical leadership. "The Savior is the perfect example of ethical behavior," Ruddle says. "We should look to institutions that are guided by His teachings as leaders on this issue."

Ruddle also serves as the advisor for the local chapter of the International City/County Management Association, where he builds connections between students and local government officials, creating opportunities for students to work on real projects with local municipalities.

Ruddle finds his new role to be personally affirming and professionally satisfying. BYU's mission gives Ruddle a sense of belonging that allows him to be his full self. "When I incorporate religion into what I do, I feel like the most natural version of myself," Ruddle says. "I am my most authentic self at BYU Marriott."



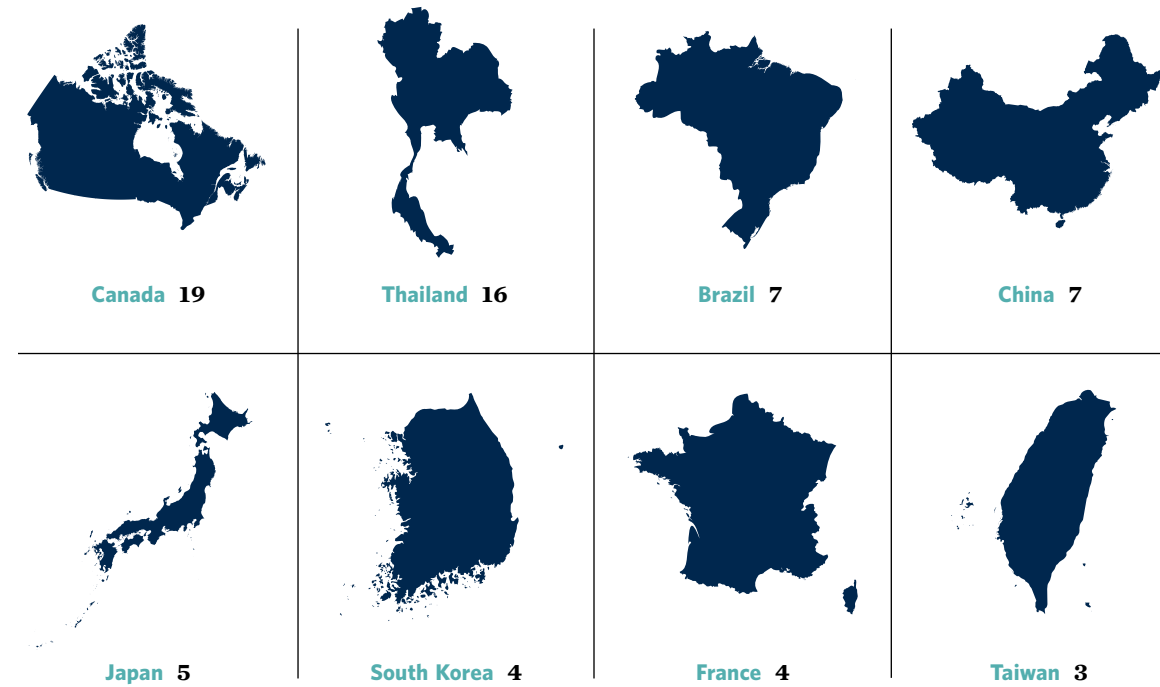
Alumni Updates

Things have come full circle for **Chauma Jansen**, who received a scholarship from American Indian Services years ago. This crucial assistance helped her earn both a bachelor's degree and an MPA and planted a desire in her heart to go back and serve her community. Almost two decades after graduating, Jansen, an enrolled member of the Sioux/Assiniboine tribe, is now executive director of American Indian Services and is working hard to help others experience the same opportunities that changed her life. Read her story on page 32.

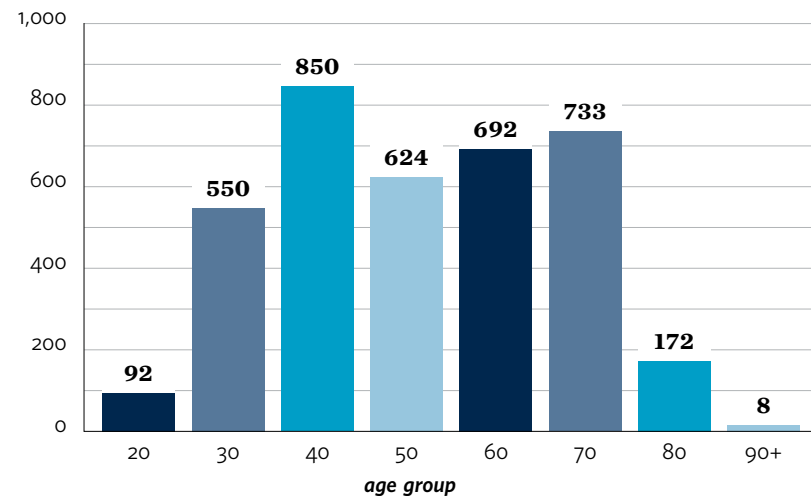


Alumni Report

Top International Countries Where Alumni Live



Number of Living Alumni by Age



Alumni Stats

Total living alumni

3,845

Number of women

1,098

Number of men

2,747

Total living international

101

Revamping a Hospital, Transforming a Community

In December 2022, **Scott Adams** retired as CEO of Pullman Regional Hospital in Washington state. After 30 years of dedicated service, Adams now has the opportunity to reflect on the experiences he has had uniting and improving the Pullman community.

Adams's journey to Pullman's administrative staff started with an interest in healthcare, specifically dentistry. When he was not accepted into the dental schools he applied for, Adams shifted gears and decided to pursue an MPA in 1980.

"The environment of support was exceptional, and the education itself was pertinent for the time," says Adams about the program. "Because we were a small class, we got to know the professors well, and we appreciated the insight from their experiences."

A few years after graduation, Adams applied for an administrative job opening at a community hospital in the remote Washington town of Pullman; he was hired, and he and his family have been in Pullman ever since.

When he started as CEO at the small hospital in 1992, Adams immediately became aware of needed changes. "The hospital hadn't developed a vision of what was most important to it or how it could best meet the needs of the community," says Adams. "So we

took about nine months to gather input from the staff, physicians, and community members to understand what was possible for the future."

In directly addressing the undefined values and priorities of the hospital, Adams and his colleagues created a timeless vision centered on inclusivity and intentionality. This focus on cultural underpinnings helped the hospital reorient itself toward this new vision. Adams conducted new onboarding-type orientations for the entire staff to ensure everyone understood the new expectations regarding their service as a hospital. In addition, he and his staff put together plans for a new hospital facility, which has stood as a physical representation of the collaboration between the community and the hospital staff since its completion in 2004.

Adams also involved locals in the building process. "We had community committees that helped us design the interior of the hospital, picking out furnishings and other items. Those who helped felt some ownership of what we were doing. We've always considered ourselves stewards of the hospital for the community," says Adams.

The new hospital Adams helped create—along with the community that rallied around it—continues to make positive ripples in Pullman. "The community-focused culture



that we've worked to develop and strengthen at the hospital has permeated through the community," says Adams.

Adams acknowledges that his MPA degree gave him vital knowledge about organizational behavior that enabled him to direct the transformation of Pullman Regional Hospital. "I was privileged to help create an environment where the people who are doing the caregiving feel like they're cared for, like somebody is making sure that their work environment is uplifting and positive and that they have sufficient resources," says Adams. "We've all been a part of a great team effort, and it's a pretty spectacular story of how a small hospital can have a much bigger impact on the broader community."

Now that Adams is retired, he looks forward to traveling with his wife, Sharon, to visit their children and grandchildren.

Persistence Pays Off

Over the course of his life, **Clark Pew** has learned that persistence pays off. The BYU Marriott executive MPA (EMPA) alumnus worked hard to achieve his academic goals and now lives in India and works for the US Department of State.

Pew graduated from BYU in 2002 with a degree in international politics. He then spent six years as a project manager for a software company, working his final six months in the United Kingdom. From there he returned to Utah to work for Cisco, and a few years later he accepted a position as the public affairs manager in the University Relations office at BYU.

Getting a master's degree was always on Pew's mind, and working at BYU provided him with the perfect opportunity to do so. Although he had originally wanted to study in the MBA program, he chose the EMPA program after learning about how the content aligned with his BYU job.

Pew tackled several challenging classes while working a full-time job, serving in the Church, and taking care of his family. As he made his way through the program, Pew learned firsthand that persistence pays off. The idea of quitting tempted Pew, but he knew that staying in the program would be worth the challenge.

Though the classes were sometimes tough, Pew enjoyed the content. "I'd come home after class so pumped because of how fascinating the material was," he says. His enthusiasm for the content was motivated in part by his professors. "I appreciated the faculty," Pew says. "The professors cared about me and wanted me to succeed. Their passion for public service inspired me to learn more."

Pew's classmates also inspired him to continue to learn. "I appreciated the camaraderie among my peers and the work that we accomplished in our groups," he says. "I got to know them and see their strengths. Their talents and abilities impressed me." Those friendships helped Pew and his classmates push through and finish the program.

Pew graduated from the EMPA program in 2017 and now works for the US Department of State. In November 2022, Pew and his wife and four children

moved to Chennai, India, where he reviews and approves nonimmigrant visas. In two years, Pew and his family will move to another country on a similar assignment. Pew and his wife, Amanda, both served missions in Brazil, and that's where they expect to be assigned after they complete their two years in India. Pew recognizes that these opportunities and his previous success hinge on his partnership with his wife. "I couldn't have done any of this without her," he says.

One of the most challenging of these opportunities was becoming a diplomat. The process is rigorous and challenging, filled with tests and interviews. "I'm proud to be a United States diplomat," Pew says. "This is something that I've worked hard for."

Pew's journey serves as a reminder that slow and steady progress can yield great results. "It comes back to persistence," he says. "Keep an end destination in mind and try to work toward it, even when you feel like you're not immediately heading toward that goal."



Mentoring, Money, and an MPA

More than two decades after he graduated with an MPA degree, **David Tanner** still relies on what he learned at the Romney Institute. As a director of the University of Georgia's (UGA) Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Tanner consults state leaders, community organizers, and county and city elected officials.

Tanner grew up in Salt Lake City and graduated from Brigham Young University in 1995 with a bachelor's degree in history and minors in psychology and business. He worked at the general education honors office for two years and then started the MPA program at BYU Marriott.

"Having a broad base in education has been incredibly helpful in my career," Tanner says. "Between my undergrad and the MPA program, I felt incredibly prepared for work."

Tanner's undergrad at BYU provided him with a strong core curriculum and helped him realize the value in pursuing his passions. "I don't have a burning desire to make a lot of money, but I do have an interest in making a difference," he says.

During his graduate studies, Tanner benefited from the MPA program's focus on management. He was inspired by a guest lecturer from the Utah Office of Planning and Budget, which led him to apply for a similar position when he and



his family moved to Atlanta for his wife's work. "The day we arrived in Atlanta, I was hired at the Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB)," he says.

Although Tanner started as a junior analyst at the OPB, he eventually became the deputy director of the office, overseeing billions of dollars for the state. He loved developing the programs and the funding mechanisms necessary to implement policies.

In his first few years at the OPB, Tanner created a framework, structured like a decision tree, to determine how and where the governor could reduce costs. "It was a perfect application of what I learned in my MPA program—how to help leaders make a decision about politically important programs in the state," he explains. That same framework was used by the Georgia House of Representatives and Senate.

After 12 years with the OPB, Tanner began working as an associate director of the State Services and Decision Support division at UGA's Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Currently, he consults with government agencies to address some of Georgia's most pressing challenges, such as workforce issues and economic development. He also trains incoming Georgia legislators about the state budget process and how bills become laws.

"To keep it simple, I am basically a consultant for the government," Tanner says.

Above all, his favorite part of the job is teaching and mentoring students at UGA—or as he refers to them, "the next generation of public managers." As part of the MPA community, he looks forward to supporting and inspiring future MPA students.



1974

William Marty Kelsey graduated from the MPA program in 1974. While in the program, he came to love public service, and his professors instilled in him a desire to work in the public sector. After graduation he immediately started working in Wyoming in municipal government. Five years later, Kelsey accepted a job at Western Wyoming Community College, where he spent most of his career. First he served as assistant vice president and HR director, and then he served as CFO and vice president for administration for 27 years. Kelsey says one of his greatest accomplishments was successfully guiding the college through challenging financial periods. In addition to assisting the college, Kelsey served on various public sector boards. Kelsey is currently retired and living in Green River, Wyoming. He and his wife, Carol, are parents of four children and grandparents to ten grandchildren.



1987

Layne Long's passion has always been building things. As a young boy, he sculpted buildings and roads out of Lego bricks and Lincoln Logs. In college he worked construction jobs and eventually decided that he wanted to build actual cities. Long graduated from the MPA program in 1987 and has participated in city management for the past 34 years. He is currently the city manager of Marina, California, a rapidly growing coastal community, where he has served for the past nine and a half years. Prior to working in Marina, he served as the city manager of Draper and Springville, Utah. He is most proud of his work collaborating on strategic plans to improve quality of life, guiding cities through economic downturns and the pandemic, and developing affordable housing projects. Long and his wife, Maggie, have six children and four grandchildren. He loves playing the piano, going for walks on the beach, biking, and gardening.



1997

Elizabeth Calhoun Rahter always wanted to be a criminal prosecutor and planned on going to law school after earning a bachelor's degree. When she realized that she could receive two graduate degrees simultaneously, she jumped at the chance. In 1997 she graduated with her JD/MPA. In the following years, Rahter worked as both a career criminal prosecutor and chair of the "Week of the Family Foundation," where she helped plan a yearly event that brought different community groups together to celebrate and strengthen families. Now a full-time mom, Rahter practices law part-time as a solo practitioner. Her proudest accomplishments include helping her children grow and progress, growing the Week of the Children Foundation, and taking on challenging trials. Rahter's newest hobby is making tables, having recently developed the patience to tackle long projects.



2002

Debra Foutz Gibbons was a student in the Executive MPA program when she married her husband, Scott. After Gibbons graduated from the program in 2003, the couple moved to Iowa, where Scott attended chiropractic school. Scott graduated in June of 2006, and the couple set up their own practice, BridgeTower Chiropractic, in Meridian, Idaho, where they still live today. The couple's chiropractic practice pairs cutting-edge equipment with nutrition to improve the health of patients. As the office manager of BridgeTower, Gibbons handles marketing, scheduling, insurance billing, and much more. Her proudest accomplishments include, in her words, "marrying a wonderful guy and having two amazing children." Gibbons enjoys reading, baking, and working out, and she loves learning about natural ways to help her improve her health. She also enjoys volunteering in her community, and she has served in many different callings in the Church.



2002

Jennifer Francom-Johnson recently accepted a position as an assistant community manager for Desert Color, starting a brand-new career path in community management. Prior to Desert Color, Francom-Johnson worked as a finance director, HR manager, and bookkeeper for EOQS Consulting Firm/Residential Treatment Centers. Francom-Johnson is a member of the BYU MPA Alumni Advisory Board, where she meets annually to discuss the goals and objectives of the program. She is also a member of the Children's Discovery Advisory Board. Francom-Johnson currently lives in St. George, Utah, and loves staying active in her free time; she plays pickleball, hikes, and runs. She also enjoys singing and performing. Francom-Johnson has three children; one is serving a mission in Honolulu, Hawaii, and the other two live with her. She loves watching them excel in their sports.



2010

Ariel Lara graduated from the MPA program in 2010. Afterward, he accepted an internship with the United States General Services Administration (GSA), the acquisition organization for the government. He enjoyed his internship so much that he has stayed with the GSA ever since. Lara works in the security solutions branch as an IT specialist, leading a team in developing and implementing background investigation processes, including GSA-wide identity, credential, and access management solutions. When Ukraine was invaded by Russia, his efforts helped expedite the evacuation of public servants, enabling them to leave much more quickly than usual. He lives with his wife, Lisa, and their five children in Denver, Colorado. Lara loves classic cars and anything to do with sports and the outdoors. He is a volunteer head soccer coach at the Colorado Edge Soccer Club in Arvada and recently led his team to their first undefeated season.



2011

Laura Dawn Gullede earned her Executive MPA in 2011. After graduating, she sought out jobs she found interesting and challenging. She worked hard to pursue her interests and accept advancement opportunities. She most recently worked as a consultant for Calibre Systems Inc., a government consulting company that helps optimize and increase the efficiency of government agencies. After the birth of her second son, Gullede chose to be a stay-at-home mom. Gullede's philosophy in life is that making and maintaining good relationships with other people is truly important, especially at work. She recognizes the value of being a team player, staying humble, and doing everything she can to help the people around her. In her free time, Gullede enjoys yoga, reading, cooking, and spending time outdoors. She lives in Leesburg, Virginia, with her husband, Alan, and their two sons.



2017

Cade Shiozaki is a 2017 JD/MPA graduate who is currently serving as a JAG officer with the US Army Reserve. As the chief of administrative law, he advises commanders across the western US on legal and soldier discipline issues. He also represents the federal government in administrative separation boards. Shiozaki initially enlisted in the Utah National Guard as a way to receive funding for college, and he has continued serving in the army since 2009. He hopes to stay with the US Army Reserve for the next six years until he retires. He says, "I'm proud to put on the uniform every day and serve as a member of a team with incredible people who love our country." On his days off, Shiozaki likes to work as a substitute teacher and participate in the Utah State Bar high school outreach program. He lives with his wife, Ashlie, and their four children in Stansbury Park, Utah. In his spare time, Shiozaki likes to play one of the 250 board games that he owns.

Ripples of Education



As an undergraduate student from the small town of Kamas, Utah, **Chauma Jansen** received a scholarship from American Indian Services. That scholarship helped her earn her bachelor's degree in sociology from BYU, and then she returned to school for a master's degree in public administration. Now, as a BYU Marriott alumna and the executive director of American Indian Services, Jansen works to assist others in the same way she was helped.

American Indian Services is a nonprofit organization based in Lehi, Utah, that provides scholarships primarily to Native American students across the United States. Jansen is Navajo and is an enrolled member of the Sioux/Assiniboine tribe. The scholarship she received from the program not only provided

financial assistance for her studies but also inspired her to give back.

"Their help allowed me to pursue and finish my education," she says. "The support I received put something in my heart and mind that let me know I needed to go back and serve my community. Knowing that people actually care if somebody receives an education impacted my life and my whole career."

In 2005 Jansen graduated from the MPA program with the goal to use her degree to serve her community. She started working for the Utah State human resource department in 2006. Two years later, she chose to become the primary caretaker of her four children. Jansen returned to the workforce in 2019 and accepted a position at the Urban Indian Center of Salt Lake. The opportunity to work as the executive director of American Indian Services—the same organization that had helped her two decades earlier—came up two and a half years later. She jumped at the chance and was hired.

Jansen chose to pursue an MPA to prepare her for a career of public and nonprofit service. "No matter what I ended up doing, I wanted to serve the general public, including marginalized communities and communities in need," Jansen says. "Every community needs public service work."

The support that Jansen provides to members of her community through American Indian

Services changes not only the lives of individuals but the community as a whole. Jansen believes that the ripples of an education spread far and wide, and the impact that it can have on families, tribal nations, and communities is undeniable. The students who receive scholarships through American Indian Services become leaders in education and government, and their influence helps their communities flourish.

Jansen also understands the importance of receiving encouragement and support from people in your life. "Finding a support system is essential," she says. "Find close friends with similar trials or complications. A good support system always helps you and pushes you toward finishing your education."

Jansen hopes others, especially her own children, will understand the importance of receiving an education and find the courage and resources to push through the challenges.

"If I can graduate from college, anybody can," she says. "School was not easy for me. I worked hard. Knowing that one of us can succeed will hopefully inspire others to succeed as well."

For those who are worried about their educational future, Jansen encourages them to never give up. "Keep going toward that goal, even if baby steps are all you're able to manage," she concludes.

"Just keep going little by little, inch by inch, and you'll go far."

Retired County Manager Honored as MPA Alumnus of the Year

Mick Berry, retired manager of Catawba County, North Carolina, was honored at the Romney Institute's MPA Alumnus of the Year dinner.

In his remarks, Berry emphasized the importance of changing the world through Christlike leadership. "Our faith gives us the capacity to envision a better future, the confidence to make that future happen, and the courage to act in the face of challenges," Berry said at the November 4 event.

Berry grew up in Reno, Nevada, and graduated from BYU with a bachelor's degree in economics in 1990. When he returned for an advanced degree, he originally planned to study in the MBA program. But after talking with a city manager, Berry switched to the MPA program. "I had no idea what a city manager was. I just sat and listened, and I ending up having an epiphany," he says.

The MPA program thoroughly prepared Berry to be a viable candidate for public service positions after graduation. His classmates played a big role in that preparation. "One thing I loved about the program and BYU Marriott in general was the connections I had with the other students. Those friendships and relationships became invaluable, and I feel the same way about the professors," he says.

Berry thinks highly of the program as a whole. "The Romney Institute is, to me, a world-class institution. To be recognized as a successful product of the program is humbling and a great honor," he says.

After graduating from the MPA program, Berry moved to North Carolina with his family. They expected to spend a few years in the state but ended up staying in the same community for the entirety of Berry's career. He started at Catawba County in 1990 as a budget analyst, and in 2004 he became the city manager of Hickory, North Carolina. In 2016, Berry returned to working for the county, this time as county

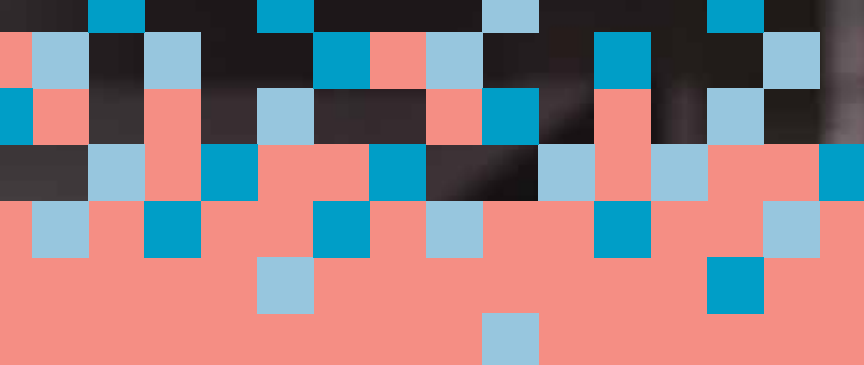


manager. Each new job came with a steep learning curve, but Berry was surrounded by people who were invested in his success. Although he retired in early 2022, he continues to work part time for the county.

At the Alumnus of the Year dinner, Berry shared stories from his career and reminded those in attendance of their potential as disciples of Christ. "All of you in this room are uniquely qualified to teach people how to foster harmony and transform communities," he said.

Berry admires the sacrifices that public servants make. "When you choose a career of public service," Berry reflects, "you can still have a fulfilling career and provide for your family, but you most likely won't be wealthy. The people going back to school for an MPA are willing to roll up their sleeves and take on some of the hardest work known to man: encouraging people to agree and to make decisions that will move a community forward."

Berry admits, "You need thick skin. You're going to take a lot of criticism. But when you accomplish goals in a community and see things change, nothing is better than that."



Romney Institute Support

After experiencing two traumatic personal attacks during her senior year at college, Debby Tucker began her advocacy work for victims of domestic violence. She began as a volunteer at the first rape crisis center in Texas in 1974 and now serves as president of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, which she cofounded in 1998. For her contributions as a compassionate and determined advocate for women and children, Tucker was recognized as this year's George W. Romney Administrator of the Year. Read more about Tucker's legacy on page 38.



Reuniting with the Romneys



The children and grandchildren of George and Lenore Romney grew up splashing and sunning at a lake cottage in Ontario, Canada, for annual summer family reunions. But in December 2022, when it came time for the extended family to gather for the first large reunion since 2005, they chose a very different location: the campus of Brigham Young University in snowy Provo.

The Romney Institute not only bears George Romney's name but also carries out his legacy. Throughout his career—as a businessman in the automotive industry, as a governor of Michigan, and as a presidential cabinet member—George Romney was known as a leader who rolled up his sleeves, stood up for civil rights, and raised up those around him. He was successful in doing good across private, nonprofit, and public settings. The Romney legacy is a legacy of service.

This legacy—and the family bonds that shaped George Romney's life—motivated Alyson Whatcott, George Romney's granddaughter, to organize the 2022 reunion. “My kids never met my grandparents,” Whatcott explains. She wanted the younger generation to hear and know more about their family. As she was looking for a gathering place, she received a birthday card from the Romney Institute and had a sudden realization: “We should involve the institute and we should host the reunion at BYU.”

The reunion began at the Romney Institute offices on the seventh floor of the Tanner Building, where family members viewed the exhibit that chronicles George Romney's career and displays mementos of his life of service. Whatcott appreciates how this display—and the partnership with the MPA program—has helped preserve and share what

she calls “all the gems” that illuminate his story. “It is wonderful,” she says, “that so many of these artifacts are in a safe place where people who didn't know my grandfather can learn about him!”

After spending time at the institute offices, the family dined at the Skyroom, a campus restaurant, where Mitt Romney and his sister Jane Romney delivered remarks. Mitt spoke about his father's love of God and love of family, and he asked the younger Romney generations to pass on those values.

The family also viewed a short film about George W. Romney produced by BYU. “Some of the kids had never heard his voice before,” Whatcott shares. “So it was meaningful to bring him to life.”

“We felt privileged to welcome the Romney family to campus to honor their father and grandfather and to remember his contributions and devotion to public service,” says Brigitte Madrian, dean of BYU Marriott. “The Romney Institute plays an integral part at BYU Marriott in shaping our students' character and in developing Christlike leaders.”

BYU MPA graduates share a common goal with Romney descendants—to uphold the values of public service, volunteerism, and integrity. Whether welcoming the next generation of Romneys for a family reunion or training the next generation of public servants, the Romney Institute honors and deepens George W. Romney's legacy.

Connecting Through the Philanthropic Commons

As fall colors blazed throughout Provo Canyon, the Romney Institute of Public Service and Ethics welcomed philanthropy experts to Aspen Grove for the 2022 “Understanding Our Philanthropic Commons” conference. The event featured formal conference sessions as well as casual outdoor excursions near Sundance, bringing together local students and world-renowned scholars to discuss philanthropy and the tools needed to better understand contemporary giving and volunteering.

The Romney Institute partnered with the University of Missouri–Kansas City and the University of Massachusetts Amherst to host the four-day conference centered on the idea of the philanthropic commons. The philanthropic commons considers the rules and customs that could and should govern nonprofits, voluntary action groups, nongovernmental organizations, arts-based entities, religious institutions, and other charitable groups.

“This conference was different because it was so intimate,” says Lindsay Harper, conference attendee and recent MPA graduate. At the conference, presenters shared research covering topics such as philanthropy in higher education, giving circles, grantmaking, volunteer work, and donor-advised funds. The limited size of the event fostered discussion. “As the discussion occurred,” Harper says, “thoughts became more refined, more thorough, more thought out.”

The event also included hikes, campfires, biking excursions, and a scenic lift ride at Sundance, which allowed participants to build relationships and truly connect. The proximity of Aspen Grove gave BYU students the opportunity to learn from experts from Brazil, Canada, the US, Mexico, Colombia, and the Netherlands.

“Attending academic conferences as a graduate student can be financially and logistically difficult,” Harper shares. “It was an unexpected opportunity for MPA and pre-PhD students to attend a conference and interact with so many renowned scholars just 20

minutes away from BYU. We hiked with them, dined with them, and asked them questions about PhD programs and careers.”

Spending time with scholars at the conference helped many MPA students determine their future plans. “Those interactions helped some prepare for PhD applications,” Harper says. “That was obviously not the purpose of the conference, but it definitely benefited students in a way that we may not have foreseen.”

In addition to fostering new relationships, the conference emphasized the collaborative backbone of philanthropic work that exists both in the office and on the ground. “I was inspired by the camaraderie that exists in the scholarly space as scholars include one another in their work,” says Harper. “Academic careers may seem isolating—everyone working on their own research at their own university,” Harper reflects, “but research is strengthened by the contributions of others, whether coauthors or scholars with opposing views. I feel like that was really the focus of this conference—working together to push research forward in a more innovative, intentional, and thorough way.”



2023 MPA Administrator of the Year Named for Advocacy Efforts

The MPA program at BYU Marriott annually recognizes an outstanding man or woman who has achieved distinction for management in the public or nonprofit sector. This year's Administrator of the Year Award was presented to Debby Tucker for her work to end domestic and sexual violence. At the award ceremony, MPA director and professor **Robert Christensen** described Tucker as a "fierce, wise, compassionate, and determined advocate for women and children," and the remarks she gave to accept the award confirmed those traits.

Tucker, an Alabama native, was prompted to begin her advocacy work after having several traumatic personal experiences during her senior year at the University of Texas.

After back-to-back violent incidents against her and her roommates, Tucker asked herself, "Wait a minute—does this stuff happen all the time?"

Then she learned the reality. "Law enforcement showed me the books of all the guys arrested and the stacks of reports women filed," Tucker explains. "I realized that I needed to do something about this problem."

Tucker began volunteering at the first rape crisis center in Texas in 1974. After a year at the center, she shifted from volunteer to full-time work. "Being in the action was healing for me," Tucker says. For her, those early years working with survivors of sexual violence fueled her passion to create change.

In 1977 she cofounded the Austin Center for Battered Women. She also served as executive director there until 1982, when she became the first executive director of the Texas Council on Family Violence. In that role, she assisted communities in Texas to establish shelters, offer services for survivors, and initiate Battering Intervention and Prevention Programs (BIPPs).



Tucker worked closely with the Texas legislature, the Governor's Office, and many state agencies as a representative for survivors of assault and many of the agencies that serve them. She promoted laws and policies to improve how the criminal justice and human service systems respond to domestic and sexual violence. She also cofounded and served as the first chair of the board for the National Network to End Domestic Violence and helped craft the Violence Against Women Act and initiate the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

Tucker has made it her mission to work with anyone and everyone to establish safety and well-being for all. She currently serves as president of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, which she cofounded in 1998. Tucker knows that there is always more to do. "We who have dedicated ourselves to ending violence cannot do it alone and need allies in government, education, and faith communities," Tucker says. "We can do it together."

Renowned Researcher Receives Gary C. Cornia Lecture Series Award

Rosemary O'Leary, a renowned researcher and professor in the public management field, received the Romney Institute's 2023 Gary C. Cornia Lecture Series Award. O'Leary, who has written numerous books and more than 135 articles on public management, presented her work on ethics and guerilla government at the award luncheon.

O'Leary was born in Kansas City, Missouri. She graduated from the University of Kansas in 1978 and received a PhD from Syracuse University in 1988. Later in her career, O'Leary taught at both of her alma maters.

O'Leary's research on collaboration and conflict resolution has been pivotal in the field of public administration. She has a unique interest in the ethics of what she calls government "guerillas"—public servants who act deliberately against the wishes communicated by their superiors. O'Leary explains that people typically engage in guerilla tactics in government out of a sense of obligation to their personal ethics and in an attempt to do the right thing. She suggests that bosses should listen and try to understand the perspective of their employees rather than get defensive when employees dissent.

Despite her many accomplishments, O'Leary says that the relationships she has with her family, peers, and students will always be her greatest contribution to the world. "Early in my career, after I won a big research award, my mother said, 'This is cool. Good for you! But I predict that in the end, your biggest accomplishment will be how you raised your daughter,'" O'Leary shares. "At the time I was coming off a high from the award, and this didn't make sense to me. But now I know it's a privilege to be a parent." O'Leary continues, "Just the fact that our three children are contributing to society in whatever way they choose makes me the proudest. My family is the contribution that's going to last."

David Matkin, an associate professor in the MPA program, says, "Anybody who has rubbed shoulders with Rosemary has felt a measure of her confidence in them or received her encouragement. She is one of the most outstanding mentors and developers of young students in public management."

One of the best examples of O'Leary's tireless dedication to students is what she did prior to the Cornia lecture series award luncheon: she offered to meet with several pre-PhD students and connect them with programs

they were interested in. O'Leary believes strongly in the power of informal mentoring—the kind that happens in the hallway or over a burger.

Now that she is retired, O'Leary plans to continue traveling and researching. One of her favorite places to visit is the Philippines, where she attended the University of the Philippines Manila as a Fulbright scholar and completed a stint with the Peace Corps, working among indigenous tribes. O'Leary knows that her work is far from done, and she looks forward to seeing the accomplishments of the next generation, including her children and her students.



Invest in the Future



Rut Beltran



Christopher Sembrano

The value of a BYU Marriott MPA degree goes well beyond that of a quality education. MPA students have experiences that increase their passion for serving a greater cause and tools that allow them to pursue it. They become leaders in every facet of their lives as they seek out and contribute to efforts to improve the world.

Following closely BYU Marriott's mission to "develop leaders of faith, intellect, and character," the MPA program prepares agile and innovative public-service leaders who can creatively solve problems and succeed in blessing God's children—all in unprecedented circumstances.

We greatly appreciate the generous support we receive that supports our efforts to create transformational learning experiences for our students. Scholarships and financial assistance set up our students to lift, lead, and serve others now and after they leave BYU.

The MPA program's scholarships have provided my family and me with the financial support we needed to begin this new chapter in our lives. Tuition is extremely difficult for students to pay, especially for international students because financial assistance is limited. Many times over the last two years, I've been amazed by the miracle of being able to study, feel safe, and be

supported through the scholarships I have received. I believe that every dollar, every donor, and every good intention changes lives for generations. You are changing lives, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for changing mine.

—Rut Beltran,
MPA '23

I grew up in a small town in the Philippines and come from a broken family that was financially unstable. I knew that the only thing that would help me reach my dreams was investing my time and effort in education. Scholarships are beneficial for students like me who can't fully afford their education. Without the scholarships, I would not be able to take advantage of this chance to further my education. I am proud to break that cycle in my family as a first-generation college graduate and now a graduate student. I will always be grateful for scholarships.

—Christopher Sembrano,
MPA '23

These and other awe-inspiring stories captured within the pages of this annual report provide small glimpses into the good accomplished by both those who participate in and those who contribute to the MPA program. We often don't perceive the influence we have on those around us.

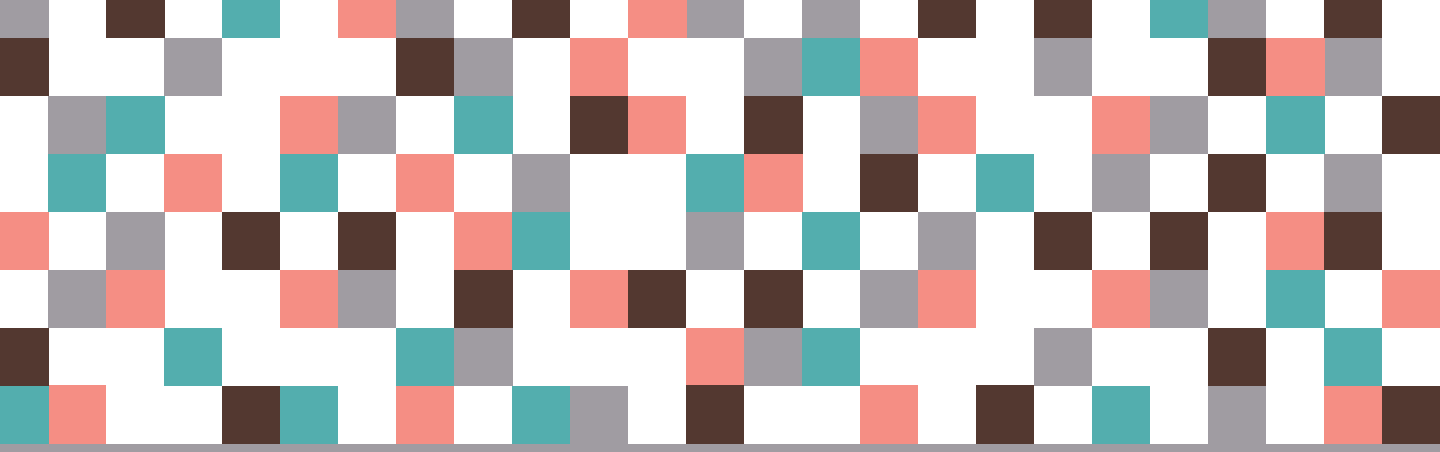
Donations to our program provide scholarships and inspiring learning opportunities to phenomenal students—students who go out across the globe and make a difference for so many others in nonprofit and for-profit organizations, through public service positions in governments, and in their homes and communities. The BYU MPA program is the original home to BYU's motto, "Enter to learn; go forth to serve." Our students and alumni are doing that every day. Your support directly facilitates both learning and serving.

Please consider making a gift to our current and future students.

Enter to Learn Go Forth in Generosity



BYU MPA
MARRIOTT SCHOOL
OF BUSINESS



BYU Romney Institute of
Public Service & Ethics
MARRIOTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS