

2021

Annual Report 2020-2021

College of Public Affairs and Community Service, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/cpacsdeanoffice>

Please take our feedback survey at: https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE

Recommended Citation

College of Public Affairs and Community Service, University of Nebraska at Omaha, "Annual Report 2020-2021" (2021). *Dean's Office*. 3.

<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/cpacsdeanoffice/3>

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Public Affairs and Community Service at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dean's Office by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.



COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

FOSTERING INCLUSIVE **COLLABORATION**

[ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021]



WELCOME FROM THE DEAN
DR. JOHN BARTLE

The theme this year is one of our three mottos: "Fostering Inclusive Collaboration." To work, I think collaboration has to be inclusive. How else can any group reach a consensus to move forward? A group, a community, a country has to bring everyone along to move forward. And yet this seems to be a difficult lesson to learn. We have always taught inclusive collaboration in CPACS but now we are upping our game. With support from the Volcker Alliance in New York, we were selected as one of four universities for their NextGen Service Partnership. This will prepare students of any major to be involved in their community and to employ the tools of collaboration. Whether they are in the public, nonprofit or private sector, public service will be an important part of their life. If they learn this at a young age they will carry it forward for many years.

We are also proud that the Fulbright Program selected two of our students and three of our faculty for fellowships. MPA student Annabelle Abisset will teach in Argentina, BMS graduate Samantha Salvatori will teach in Kyrgyzstan, Prof. Robert Blair will visit McGill University in Canada, Prof. Tara Bryan will teach at the Centre for Nonprofit Sector Research at Masaryk University in the Czech Republic, and Dr. Anne Hobbs will study prisoner re-entry in Singapore. They will take their knowledge and expertise to share, but they will also bring back ideas, insights and new practices that they will share with Nebraskans for many years to make our communities better.

Finally, 2022 is the 50th anniversary of CPACS. We will have a series of celebrations (in-person and virtual) for both the College and the departments. We hope to involve you and shoot for an even better next 50 years!

- John Bartle, CPACS Dean

CPACS PROGRAMS RANKED AMONG **BEST IN NATION BY U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT**

The UNO College of Public Affairs and Community Service was just named one of the "Best Graduate Schools Rankings" according to the 2022 U.S. News & World Report.

The new rankings place UNO's School of Criminology and Criminal Justice program at No. 13 nationally.

UNO's Criminology program is in the ranks of large schools, such as Northeastern, Rutgers-Newark, and Michigan State.

Overall, the UNO School of Public Administration received high rankings, tied at No. 28 in the nation.

Specialties within the School of Public Administration were also highly ranked:

- Public Finance & Budgeting No. 8
- Local Government Management No. 11
- Nonprofit Management No. 12
- Public Management & Leadership No. 24

Also notable is the ranking of the Grace Abbott School of Social Work's graduate programming in the top 100 programs nationally.

CPACS Dean John Bartle said the recognition for his college's programs highlight the programs' quality.

"It's no surprise to see UNO's Public Affairs programs ranked alongside institutions like Texas A&M, Florida State, Wisconsin, and Kentucky," Bartle said. "The College of Public Affairs and Community Service at UNO has a world-class faculty, we attract students from all over and we give them a rigorous, relevant education. And while we are nationally ranked, we are also locally engaged: our faculty and students work closely with community partners, nonprofits, and governments."

Deborah Smith-Howell, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs and dean of graduate studies, said the new numbers reflect the intention UNO brings to graduate programming.

"It's the Maverick way—our mission is to recruit faculty who are the best at what they do to develop leaders and equip them to make a difference in their communities and organizations," Smith-Howell said. "Add cutting-edge research and applied community service and you can see why our graduate programs continue earning these high rankings year after year."

Founded in 1972, CPACS is the only college in the University of Nebraska system dedicated entirely to public affairs and civic engagement. As such, it serves a statewide mission of coupling quality education with professional services for any students looking to improve their communities.



CPACS ENROLLMENT AT **ALL-TIME HIGH**

Despite the challenges that COVID-19 presented to nearly every aspect of everyday life, the College of Public Affairs and Community Service (CPACS) experienced all-time high enrollments.

These enrollments are not just from a few standout departments within CPACS, but a collective effort from every unit of the College. "Our enrollments increased sharply to the highest levels in the history of the College. Both undergraduate and graduate totals experienced double-digit increases, despite the challenges of COVID-19," Dr. John Bartle, dean of CPACS said.

Since the Fall of 2019, CPACS shows a total increase of 12% in enrollments at the undergraduate level, and an increase of 10% at the graduate level.

THE **HIGHLIGHTS**

In addition to these record-breaking enrollments, certain department-specific trends are of note:

- After being ranked #1 in the nation, enrollment in the Master of Science in Criminal Justice was up 16% last year, for a two-year increase of 33%.
- The Aviation Institute saw a 21% growth in majors.
- The Master of Social Work (MSW), now available online, is up by 17%.
- Enrollments in the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice experienced an 11% growth in enrollment, increasing their student count to 950 this year.
- The enrollment spike is no new trend. From 2010-2020, CPACS has experienced an overall enrollment increase of 43%. The increase is also the largest among the six colleges at UNO.

CPACS STUDENTS, FACULTY, & ALUMNA EARN FULBRIGHT AWARDS

Two students and three faculty members were recently announced as recipients of prestigious Fulbright Awards. The awards will allow these five Mavericks to pursue educational and research opportunities around the globe during the 2021-2022 academic year.

The group of students, which includes one recent alumna, and faculty also share in common that they are part of UNO's College of Public Affairs and Community Service (CPACS). They are:

- **Annabelle Abisset, Graduate Student, Public Administration**
- **Samantha Salvatori, Alumna, Multidisciplinary Studies**
- **Robert Blair, Ph.D., Public Administration**
- **Tara Bryan, Ph.D., Public Administration**
- **Anne Hobbs, Ph.D., Criminology and Criminal Justice**

"The prestige of the Fulbright awards is an impressive and fitting recognition for these faculty and students," CPACS Dean John Bartle said. "But they are much more than an award. They are an unparalleled opportunity to exchange and grow knowledge across the world. With these five Mavericks going to four continents, they will take their knowledge and expertise to share, but they will also bring back ideas, insights and new practices that they will share with Nebraskans for many years to make our communities better."

Each year, the Fulbright U.S. Student Program offers research, study and teaching opportunities in over 140 countries to recent graduates and graduate students. While thousands apply, only a small number receive funding.

CPACS STUDENT & ALUMNA RECIPIENTS



Annabelle Abisset
A Juneau, Alaska, native, Annabelle Abisset grew up in Omaha and quickly found her way to UNO for not just one but two degrees. After earning an undergraduate degree in international studies and Spanish she immediately went into the Master of Public

Administration program with a specialization in nonprofit management. She will be earning her degree in May and then heading to Argentina to help teach English.

"I decided on Argentina because, in a way, it represents who I am," Abisset said. "My mom is from Peru and my dad is from France, and Argentina was the first country I had heard of that combined South American and European roots. The idea really excited me, and I did a lot of research on Argentine history, culture, and language. It felt like an easy and natural choice."

Abisset's fascination with international experiences isn't new. She's also taken a Spring Break trip to India in 2018 and studied in Norway in 2019 as part of her master's program. It was during her India trip that she became familiar with the Fulbright process.

"Applying for the Fulbright seemed like the perfect opportunity to realize my dream of living in a Spanish-speaking country and applying my experience of teaching English I got from UNO and volunteer opportunities."

As she looks to continue her nonprofit work and study for TESOL certification, Abisset says that her UNO experience has helped her hone in on ways to turn her passion into a career.

"To me, being a Maverick means being a part of your community. I think this has helped me understand the nonprofit organizations I have been involved in or worked with and it will help me as a Fulbright scholar in a place I have never been. Being a Maverick has helped me create and foster so many relationships and I plan to bring that mindset as an English Teaching Assistant and representative of Omaha, Nebraska, and the U.S."



Samantha Salvatori
Samantha Salvatori is one of the newest members of the Maverick alumni family, graduating in December 2020 with a Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies degree with a focus in political science. An Omaha native, Salvatori says she's been interested in international affairs for years.

"Once upon a time, I thought I was going to be a journalist and foreign correspondent. That career path has never come to pass, but I have had opportunities to work with refugee, immigrant, and international populations in Omaha."

Salvatori says despite her experiences working with a wide and diverse range of people through opportunities in Omaha she's never had a chance to

travel abroad. Now, with the Fulbright, she's headed to Kyrgyzstan, which is centrally located in Asia between China and several other former Soviet bloc countries.

"I chose Kyrgyzstan because I knew I wanted to travel to somewhere that was maybe a little unexpected and would have really excellent cultural and language immersion and enrichment," she says. "I'm a political scientist and educator at heart so the overlapping historical, political, and cultural influences of Kyrgyzstan were intriguing to me from the start."

While in Kyrgyzstan, Salvatori will be an English language teaching assistant. She hopes the experience will help build a resume allowing her to work in the U.S. Department of State.

While Salvatori says her academic career - and path towards her goal of international experiences - hasn't exactly been linear, it's because of UNO she's been able to live her dream.

"To me, being a Maverick means taking chances and going after what you want despite challenges with tenacity. I am both honored and humbled to be able to represent the academic and professional excellence of UNO as a Fulbright grantee."

CPACS Students, Faculty, & Alumna Earn Fulbright Awards continued on next page.

CPACS FACULTY FULBRIGHT RECIPIENTS

Robert Blair

Robert Blair, Ph.D., is a professor emeritus of public administration and will be using his Fulbright to travel to Montreal, Canada, as part of a fellowship at the Pierre Elliot Trudeau Foundation and teaching position at McGill University. There, Blair will focus on multiculturalism and multilingualism in city governments.



"I hope to gain a deep knowledge of Canadian public policy processes and the practice of city management. I

have done work at two of UNO's sister universities in Norway and Lithuania and want to expand my work in comparative public administration and city management. Also, since Montreal is French speaking, I am studying the language and will be working with a tutor."

Blair said while the process was lengthy, submitting his application last fall and not being guaranteed placement, it was worth it.

Tara Bryan

Tara Bryan, Ph.D., is an associate professor of public administration and will be traveling to the Czech Republic for her Fulbright, where she will be working at the Centre for Nonprofit Sector Research at Masaryk University.

She said she applied because of the opportunity to see what differences exist between the U.S. and other

countries when it comes to the public sector.

"The opportunity to live and research in a different political and social context was exciting. Also, I wanted to build new professional relationships with international colleagues that can foster future research collaborations."

While in the Czech Republic, Bryan will study ways the country's nonprofit managers and staff handle accountability. This will involve a field survey, qualitative interviews, and consultations with local nonprofits. She will also be able to teach classes at her host university.

"From a personal perspective, I want to learn about Czech culture, traditions, and history, and experience living in a different country for an extended period of time. I will also benefit from the time and space to reflect on my future trajectory as a researcher and teacher."

Bryan says she hopes the experience will not just benefit her own research, but UNO as well.

"The opportunity to travel, learn, and serve in the Czech Republic is a privilege. The Fulbright experience will undoubtedly open the door to new connections to international scholars in the field who can contribute to UNO's growing international partnerships, teaching, and research opportunities."



Anne Hobbs

Anne Hobbs, J.D., Ph.D., is the director of UNO's Juvenile Justice Institute within the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice. As part of her Fulbright, Hobbs will spend a year in Singapore to study prisoner reentry trends and the ways the country supports released individuals as they reenter society.



"I am most interested in which factors lead some individuals out of the criminal justice system, while others become deeply entrenched in our criminal justice systems. Really, I am simply fascinated by Singapore's reentry process, because it is organized along racial and religious lines."

Hobbs said she was inspired to apply for the Fulbright to Singapore after traveling there for a conference in 2018.

"I was initially apprehensive, thinking it would be the last place I would find creative solutions to criminal justice problems ... because Singapore is known for harsher criminal justice penalties and restrictive laws," she said. "After experiencing the country first hand, I left with a better understanding of how the law can create healthy boundaries that promote respect across cultures and a holistic society. It seems clear that some countries, like Singapore, have found the balance between releasing persons charged with a crime and maintaining a safe community."

Hobbs said that the Fulbright process was one that involved a lot of work because proposals need to identify the focus area, what partnerships could be leveraged, and why that country is vital to the research being proposed. Now that she has been awarded the grant, the next step is preparing for what will be a significant culture shift.

"Singapore is the third-most densely populated country in the world, and is one of world's most multiracial and multicultural societies. I live in Denton, Nebraska, a town of 120 people. I am so excited to experience a completely different world."

CPACS ANNOUNCES 2021 ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS



Hubert Locke Award: Vincent Webb, Ph.D.

Dr. Vincent Webb was most recently a Professor of Practice with the Center for Violence Prevention and Community

Safety and the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology from Iowa State University and has held several faculty and university administrative positions including directing and developing research centers as well as undergraduate and graduate educational programs in criminology and criminal justice. In 1973 he joined the faculty at the University of Nebraska Omaha and during the period 1974-95 he served in administrative positions including Chairing the Department of Criminal Justice and as Director of the Center for Applied Urban Research. After leaving UNO he served in administrative positions at Arizona State University West, Southern Illinois University and as Dean of the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University. His research has involved the evaluation of several youth violence prevention and intervention programs as well as youth reentry from detention. He has also conducted research on a variety of police-related topics including the police response to gangs and to human trafficking, and the impact of technology on policing. He has developed a number of collaborative educational programs in Asia and Europe, and his international activity includes that implementation of the International Self-Report Delinquency Survey (ISRSD) in China and the analysis of findings from the 2015 El Salvador

Youth Survey. Recently, he served as the Principal Investigator for a project aimed at increasing public safety in Honduras. Dr. Webb founded the Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety at Arizona State University and is the co-developer of the Arizona Violence Prevention Academy, which targeted school-based crime, violence, and disorder. His related work includes implementing a variant of the Arizona Violence Prevention Academy in several of the high-risk schools in Trinidad and Tobago. Dr. Webb has published numerous journal articles and research reports covering variety of criminal justice policies and practices, and he is the co-author of five books including the award winning Policing Gangs in America (University of Cambridge Press).

School of Criminology & Criminal Justice: Rosalyn Cotton

Ms. Rosalyn Cotton currently serves as a distinguished Chairperson on the Nebraska Board of Parole. Before her reappointment to the Nebraska Board of Parole in 2015 by Governor Pete Ricketts, Ms. Cotton was a Criminal Justice & Sociology instructor for Northeast Community College, Kaplan University and Bellevue University.



Ms. Cotton holds over 35 years of professional experience with Lancaster County Corrections as an Officer and Supervisor and with Department of Correctional Services as a Correctional Officer, Security, Unit Case Manager, Self-Defense Training Instructor, Gang Specialist and Parole Officer.

Ms. Cotton holds a Bachelor's in Pre-Law, Sociology from Wayne State College, and a Master's in urban studies-Criminal Justice from the University of Nebraska Omaha.

Ms. Cotton is a coach, sponsor, and mentor to criminal justice students. She has served as a Criminal Justice liaison to and is an accomplished leader in the community. She continues to add her invaluable experience, fortitude and intuitiveness in the education and criminal justice professional arenas. She is requested to speak to other community organizations and groups. She has presented at conferences in Nebraska, as well as nationally. She also serves on educational advisory committees.

Ms. Cotton is proud to have the opportunity to serve as the Chairperson of the Nebraska Board of Parole. She enjoys serving citizens of the State of Nebraska.

Division of Continuing Studies: Pat Thraen

As a Community Investment Officer at Peter Kiewit Foundation, I have the privilege of leading our Youth Development strategy, while also fulfilling



my passion for helping young people succeed. This role provides me with the opportunity to work with area youth organizations and intermediaries to ensure that under-served youth have access to the programs and services they need to be prepared for academic, personal, and professional success. My work focuses on improving the quality, capacity, coordination, and reach of the out-of-school time sector across Nebraska; providing under-served youth in Omaha with quality out-of-school time experiences throughout the year; and ensuring that youth have opportunities to explore and experience STEM concepts early in their educational pathway.

Throughout my career at the foundation, I have served in administrative, grants management, and

program roles, which have allowed me to build my knowledge of and network within the philanthropic sector. I received my B.A. in General Studies (with an emphasis in Non-Profit Management) from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. My husband Tony and I (both native Iowans) enjoy camping and boating, and spending time with our three adult children and four grandchildren.

Department of Gerontology: Paul P. Falkowski, Ph.D.

Dr. Paul Falkowski is dedicated to serving the people who live and work in long-term care communities. Paul has a bachelor's degree from Duquesne



University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in Music and a Master's degree in Gerontology from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and went on to earn a doctorate in

Gerontology also from the University of Nebraska. He was first attracted to the field of aging through his volunteering in nursing homes providing musical entertainment. He formed Community 360, in 1993, a nonprofit that recruited and trained some 700 volunteers for Omaha and Lincoln nursing homes over 26 years. In 2003, he contacted the Department of Gerontology at the UNO and was encouraged to pursue a Gerontology graduate certificate. Eighteen years later, he teaches online courses for the Department of Gerontology, conducting research and consulting with nursing homes. He recently developed the course "Volunteer Management and Aging Services" and is working on publishing a study in which he connects volunteerism in long-term care and the nursing home's quality of care measures. Also, he authored "Creating the Volunteer Force: Rethinking the way we use volunteers in nursing homes" and formed VolunCheerLeader LLC to provide support to nursing home managers of volunteers. His passion for volunteerism and improving the care of older adults is unwavering.

Goodrich Scholarship Program: Shavonna Holman, Ph.D.

Dr. Shavonna Holman has worked in the field of education for nearly 20 years. She is an Assistant Professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the Educational Administration Department.



In that position, she not only teaches and advises graduate students, but is also the Coordinator of the Master's in Educational Administration Program. Dr. Holman received her Bachelor's in Elementary Education, Master's in Elementary Education, and Master's in Administration and Supervision from the University of Nebraska-

Omaha and her Doctoral degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a focus on Race, Class, Access, Gender and Equity. She has been recognized for her efforts as an educator receiving the University of Nebraska Distinguished Teaching Award and the College of Education and Human Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award. She has been an Elementary Teacher as well as an Elementary Assistant Principal for the Omaha Public Schools. She has a strong desire to improve the educational outcomes and opportunities for students, particularly in urban settings and has conducted research and been on multiple evaluation teams to help improve the challenges which exist in these settings. Currently, Dr. Holman serves as the President of the Board of Education for the Omaha Public Schools as well as several other local and national boards.

Goodrich Scholarship Program: R.J. (Randy) Stevenson

R.J. (Randy) Stevenson is Chair of the firm's Labor, Employment and Employee Benefits Law Group. He counsels and represents private and public employers in all aspects of labor relations and employment law, including matters involving workplace safety and health (OSHA) across the United States.

Randy is one of only a handful of labor and employment lawyers in the region who has been elected a Fellow of "The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers," the premier peer-selected



organization of labor and employment lawyers in North America. Admission is by invitation only, following a rigorous screening process.

Since 2003, Randy has been selected by his peers for inclusion

in The Best Lawyers in America® in the fields of Employment Law and Labor Law, and was named that publication's 2016 and 2020 "Labor Law - Management Lawyer of the Year" for Omaha and its 2017 "Employment Law - Management Lawyer of the Year." He has been listed for many years in Great Plains Super Lawyers®, Chambers USA, America's Leading Lawyers for Business® ("Band A"), and in Martindale-Hubbell® with an "AV" (the highest) rating. Additionally, Randy is listed as a "Midwest Star" in Benchmark, America's Leading Litigation Firms and Attorneys®.

Randy is a past Chair of the Nebraska State Bar Association's Labor Relations and Employment Law Section and has served on the boards of numerous community, professional, and civic groups. He was also a former Adjunct Faculty member at Creighton University's School of Law.

School of Public Administration: Wayne D. Hudson

Chief Deputy Wayne D. Hudson began his law enforcement career as a Security Police Specialist in the United States Air Force serving from 1986-1992. He started his civilian law enforcement career in 1994 as a Reserve Deputy Sheriff with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office (DCSO). In 1995 he was able to obtain a full-time position with the agency. He rose through the ranks to Sergeant in 1998, Lieutenant in 2005, and Captain in 2013. His leadership experience includes the areas of managing patrol deployment, emergency

management, fiscal management, human resources, policy development, project management, strategic planning, employee development, public relations, community engagement, court security, building security, and school resources.

During his tenure with the DCSO his assignments included Criminal Investigation Bureau, Uniform Patrol, the County Court Division, District Court Division, Entrance Screening Division, Front Desk



Division, Court Services Bureau, Administrative Services Bureau, Rapid Deployment Unit, and the CALEA Division.

Chief Deputy Hudson holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Master's

Degree in Public Administration. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy's 234th Session and various management and leadership schools. He is a past President of the Metropolitan Chiefs Association. His professional organizational memberships includes the National Organization for Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) where he is an alumna of the Chief Executive Officer Mentoring Program, board member for the Black Police Officer's Association (BPOA) of Omaha, board member for the Women Center for Advancement (WCA), and 100 Black Men of Omaha. He is also a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

Chief Deputy Hudson has been recognized for his community work by being selected as the Douglas County Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Living the Dream award recipient and Urban League Leadership Award in Government. He firmly believes that the community is at its best when law enforcement and the community work in collaboration to solve criminal justice issues.

School of Public Administration: Dr. Athena Ramos

Dr. Athena Ramos is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Promotion and is affiliated with the Center for Reducing Health Disparities



and the Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (CS-CASH) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) in Omaha, Nebraska. Over the past 20

years, she has worked to reduce health disparities, foster health equity, and promote community well-being. She is an experienced administrator, program manager, and researcher with proven ability to develop and implement social, health, and human service programs with culturally diverse populations. Ramos completed a Bachelor's degree in public administration, a Master's degree in urban studies, and a Master's degree in business administration from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She went on to complete a PhD in international family and community studies at Clemson University. Dr. Ramos continuously strives to bring a sense of hope and vitality to the work that she does both professionally and personally. She has been honored for her commitment and dedication to making Omaha and Nebraska a healthier, more inclusive, and vibrant place to live, work, and play. She was recognized as one of the "40 Under 40" by the Midlands Business Journal, one of the Ten Outstanding Young Omahans, the Nebraska Latino American Commission's Inspiration Award recipient, and a WCA Tribute to Women Honoree. Dr. Ramos serves on the Board of Directors for the International Society for Agricultural Safety & Health (ISASH) and Comunidad Maya Pixan Ixim.

**School of Public Administration:
Jessica “Jay” Warren-Teamer**

Jay Warren-Teamer is an Omaha native who has spent her personal and professional life serving our community. She received her B.S. in Child, Youth and Family Studies from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and earned her Masters in Public Administration from the University of Nebraska-Omaha. Jay has worked in the non-



profit/philanthropic sector for the last ten years, with previous roles at Partnership 4 Kids, United Way of the Midlands and Mutual of Omaha. In August 2020, she was appointed as Director of Diversity and Inclusion at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, where she drives the diversity, equity and inclusion strategy for the company.

With her childhood friend, Ashlei Spivey, Jay co-founded I Be Black Girl in 2017 and leads the groups' giving circle, IBBGives. Highly engaged in our community, Jay has served on the boards of Kids Can Community Center, Women's Fund of Omaha and MENTOR Nebraska. She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Previous recognitions include the WCA's Tribute to Women Young Leader Award (2009), Women's Fund of Omaha Inner Circle honoree (2017), Greater Omaha Chamber YP Council Changemaker Award (2018) and Urban League of Nebraska African-American Leadership Award (2019.)

Her greatest joy is her family. She's the oldest child of Thomas & Aileen Warren, and proud big sister of Thomas, Jr. and Alexandra. She is TT Jay to Evan (6) and Savannah (5). Shannon Teamer is her high school sweetheart and the love of her life. They've been happily married since 2014, and welcomed their first child, Kingston in 2019.

Aviation Institute: Ryan Goertzen

Ryan Goertzen, Vice President Maintenance Workforce Development, AAR (NYSE: AIR), a leading aviation services provider to commercial airlines and governments worldwide. He oversees AAR's various workforce based initiatives and was responsible for the development the EAGLE Career Pathway Program. Mr. Goertzen is also the President of Choose Aerospace, whose purpose is to unite the aerospace industry to implement solutions to the workforce shortage.



Mr. Goertzen started with Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology in 2011, holding the positions of vice president of education, president of Spartan's Tulsa campuses and corporate officer. Goertzen previously spent three years at AAR Corp managing the training and ASAP programs in Oklahoma City. He began his career as a pilot instructor for Air Wisconsin Airlines Corporation where he was responsible for Air Wisconsin's first learning management system and e-learning content used in recurrent pilot training. In 2005 Mr. Goertzen transitioned to the maintenance side of the airline as Air Wisconsin's Manager of Maintenance Training and ASAP Manager.

Goertzen holds a B.S. in Aviation and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Goertzen is married to the love of his life Jenny and has three sons Jacob, Joshua, and Jack.



**Aviation Institute:
Katie Wrobel**

Katie Wrobel began her flying career during freshman year of college. In three years, she received all required ratings and became a flight instructor during her senior year at UNO. After graduating, she flew for American

Eagle for five years and was based in San Juan, PR, Chicago, Dallas/Ft. Worth, and New York. During that time, Katie had the opportunity to fly multiple aircrafts including the ATR, Embraer, and Saab. In 2005, Katie joined UPS as a flight engineer and was quickly promoted to first officer on the Airbus 300. After flying the Airbus for 14 years, Katie became a captain on the Boeing 747 in 2019.

**Grace Abbott School of Social Work:
Kerry Beldin, Ph.D.**

Kerry Beldin began her academic career at the University of Nebraska Kearney as an Adjunct Instructor in 2004-2005 and then as a Lecturer in 2005-2006. She became an Assistant Professor at UNK in August 2006-2007. Kerry joined the Grace Abbott School of Social Work as an Assistant Professor in August 2008.



Dr. Beldin served as MSW Coordinator, Graduate Program Chair, and Interim Director. She received the Outstanding Alumni Teaching Award in 2016 and the Chancellor's Medal in May 2019.

Dr. Beldin has been heavily involved in community assessments aimed at improving responses to domestic violence and sexual assault. She led 3 community assessments in Lancaster County Nebraska which led to a fundamental change in the training and policies around how law enforcement in that jurisdiction approach sexual assault cases. The LPD captain from the assessment team and Dr. Beldin were invited to speak at an international conference regarding their work, which was among the first of its kind in the United States.

Dr. Beldin has led 2 community assessments in Douglas County Nebraska evaluating domestic violence response, which continues to influence changes in policy and practice. She has served as a consultant for Praxis International, speaking on panels and webinars, training other professionals in these research methods to affect policy and practice in communities around the United States.

SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

[CRIMINOLOGY.UNOMAHA.EDU]

Top 5 MAJOR Awards & Honors Notable Unit Accomplishments

1. Hired 3 outstanding new assistant professors—Dr. Jessie Huff, Dr. Sadaf Hashimi, and Dr. Erin Kearns.
2. Continued a very high research productivity level of our faculty with 92 peer reviewed publications accepted or published during 2020.
3. Provide a high quality education to all of our students and adapting to the challenges posed by the pandemic including 87 internship positions in the criminal justice community! Recruiting and admitting a top-quality incoming cohort of PhD students and growing our Master's programs by leaps and bounds.
4. Enhanced the Victimology area of excellence by initiating the Victimology and Victim Studies Research Lab, and proposing a minor and certificate in Victimology and Victim Studies.
5. NCJR won \$554,541 in new funding through 2 different projects, partnering with the Douglas County Department of Corrections and the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services. JJI won a new 3 year contract to assist Nebraska with coming back into compliance with the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Core Requirements (\$386,000).

- UNO SCCJ doctoral program US NWR national ranking moved up to #13 from #17 in the US.
- Dr. Samantha Clinkinbeard received UNO Alumni Teaching Award 2020.
- Dr. Justin Nix received American Society of Criminology Division of Policing Early Career Award and the Journal of Crime and Justice Outstanding Paper Award, Midwestern Criminal Justice Association.
- JJI's Juvenile Reentry Mentoring Project has grown to students on 6 campuses (UNO, UNL, UNK, UNMC, Wesleyan University and Doane University) with requests to share the model with universities in other 4 states and 1 country! Over 225 youth in a detention facility have been matched to a student mentor.

Community Partners

The SCCJ developed a new internship partnership with Lutheran Family Services and Heartland Crisis Intervention Training. Students are able to observe and support the Heartland CIT training efforts of law enforcement officers in safer and effective intervention with individuals in mental health crisis. Through their internship experiences, students are able to extend their learning beyond the classroom, apply their existing knowledge, and contribute meaningfully to the metro area community.

JUVENILE JUSTICE INSTITUTE

The Juvenile Justice Institute (JJI) evaluates programs across the state of Nebraska and we are passionate about translating research into practice because it is a critical step to improving services, and outcomes, for Nebraska's youth.

Preparing Students for the Workforce

The JJI also leads a service-learning course that has a reputation for preparing young people for careers in the field of juvenile justice. The Juvenile Reentry course allows students to have real life experience in the field by matching students to youth committed to a Nebraska Youth Rehabilitation Centers (Kearney & Lincoln), the Douglas County Detention Center, and other facilities across Nebraska. In 2021, JJI received requests to expand the Reentry Project to Universities in Texas, Missouri, and India!

Evidence-based Nebraska

The JJI completed Community Needs Assessments for 89% of counties across Nebraska (83 communities). These Assessments contained several sources of data including racial and ethnic disparities at each system point, education, mental health, substance use, legal issues and policies, and information on their community teams. The aim of these assessments was to help counties objectively examine the programs and interventions needed to serve youth better with the use of data.

The JJI continues to assist with data collection through the Juvenile Case Management System (JCMS), which is used to track how effective programs are at preventing youth from recidivating. Under this project, the JJI provided technical assistance to 248 programs in FY2021, from Omaha to Scottsbluff. This represents a 13.8% increase from 2020. The JJI has published multiple reports, briefs, and evaluations about the efficacy of programs.

Compliance with the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act JJDPA)

The JJI was awarded a multi-year contract to examine whether Nebraska will resume participation with the JJDPA through compliance with the Act and rules established through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).. Participating states receive federal dollars to address juvenile justice system issues, and are required to comply with 4-core requirements including: 1) examination of racial disparity within the juvenile justice system, 2) sight and sound separation from adult offenders; 3) removal from adult facilities, and 4) deinstitutionalization of status offenders.

Nebraska Collaborative for Violence Intervention and Prevention

The JJI collaborates with faculty at the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and the University of Nebraska Medical Center on issues related to violence in the Omaha-area. JJI assists in developing and evaluating violence prevention programs, to reduce violence for young people.

The full text for all of our reports is available at jinebraska.org/reports.

Ryan Koltas: Making Every Day Great

Ryan Koltas' love for the U.S. Air Force and the study of criminology and criminal justice made attending UNO an easy choice for him. Born in Lorton, Virginia, his family relocated to Nebraska when Ryan was very young. Ryan's father, now a retired Air Force Major, was active duty at the time and stationed at Offutt Air Force Base. What started out as a planned three-year-stay in the Omaha area turned out to be a permanent living situation. From the time Ryan was 16 years old, he knew he wanted to pursue a career in the criminal justice field. "And since UNO has one of the premiere criminal justice programs in the nation it was a no-brainer to stay near home for college," he said.

Ryan's aspirations were always greater than earning a bachelor's degree. Joining the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) program at UNO was also part of his plan. Following high school graduation, Ryan spent the summer months physically conditioning through daily runs and doing calisthenics in preparation for what lay ahead. "My dad, being a retired Air Force Major, certainly encouraged me to join the military for at least four years," Ryan said. "But aside from my father's influence, I have always had the desire to do something truly meaningful with my life. Serving as a leader in the world's greatest Air Force certainly qualifies as meaningful work in my eyes."

Ryan's time in the AFROTC program has been a game-changer. "From a professional standpoint, I feel that I am in a great position to succeed in life because of ROTC," he said. "I have been pushed to grow professionally and I don't think I would have had I not joined

the program."

During his senior year of college, Ryan was tapped to serve as the Cadet Wing Commander (CW/CC) for his unit, meaning he oversees all cadet-run activities for roughly 80 cadets. He is instrumental in contributing toward each cadet's development in becoming an Air Force Officer.

Ryan, who will be graduating with honors from UNO this spring with a degree in criminology and criminal justice and a minor in psychology, has long had aspirations of becoming a lawyer. He has been selected for the AFROTC Educational Delay-In program, meaning he will be allowed to start law school in the fall of 2021. Upon completion of law school he will serve as an Air Force Officer in the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corp. Ryan is still deciding where to attend law school – he's narrowed his choices to the University of Colorado-Boulder or The Ohio State University.

Overall, Ryan is thrilled with all the opportunities opening up for him. Being an officer in the JAG Corps allows Ryan to partner his love for the law with his desire to serve in the military. "As an Officer in the JAG Corps, my duties will be two-fold," Ryan explained. "I will be an attorney and a military officer. From the standpoint of an attorney, I will perform the general duties necessary to carry out the overall mission of the Air Force from a legal standpoint. As a military officer, it will be my duty to provide effective supervision of the enlisted personnel serving below me and inspire them to perform to their peak capability."

Ryan Koltas lives by the mantra "It's a great day to have a great day." Ryan knows great days do not just magically happen – you have to make them happen. And that is what he seems to

specialize in. Prior to starting college, he set several lofty goals for himself, namely maintaining a 4.0 GPA, earning an AFROTC scholarship, being named Cadet Wing Commander, being accepted into a top law school and eventually serving as a JAG Officer in the U.S. Air Force. He's still upset by the one A- he received in a Stats class his sophomore year. Aside

from that one A-, Ryan has achieved everything else he set his mind to. With that kind of hard work and determination, we are confident Ryan will have many great days ahead of him.

Congratulations on all your past successes as well as your future endeavors, Ryan. Keep doing UNO proud!

NEBRASKA CENTER FOR JUSTICE RESEARCH

This year, Nebraska Center for Justice Research (NCJR) faculty and staff focused on maintaining progress, despite pandemic challenges, on multiple reentry, assessment, and victimization externally-funded projects.

Victimization

- 2020-2022: Expanding the Knowledge Base about Child Advocacy Centers
- NCJR Faculty: Ryan Spohn
- Principal Investigator: Teresa Kulig
- Funding Agency: National Institute of Justice
- Amount Awarded: \$566,259

Risk and Need Assessment in Corrections

- 2020-2021 Technical Assistance Provision for Corrections
- NCJR Faculty/Staff: Michael Campagna
- Funding Agency: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
- Funded Amount: \$34,228

Reentry

- 2019-2023: Reducing Violence and Recidivism through VRP Aftercare and CBI Open Groups
- NCJR Faculty/Staff: Ryan Spohn, Michael Campagna (research partners)
- Funding Agency: Bureau of Justice Assistance
- Amount Awarded to UNO: \$159,997

2020-2022: Vocational & Life Skills Evaluation

- NCJR Faculty/Staff: Ryan Spohn, Michael Campagna, & Katelynn Towne
- Principal Investigator: Ryan Spohn
- Funding Agency: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
- Funded Amount: \$329,571

2020-2023: Evaluation of Douglas Co.

Assessment and Case Management Services

- NCJR Faculty: Ryan Spohn
- Co-Principal Investigators: Emily Wright & Ryan Spohn
- Funding Agency: Douglas County Department of Corrections
- Funded Amount: \$225,000

2020-2023 Achieving Change Together, Reentry Program Evaluation

- NCJR Faculty/Staff: Ryan Spohn & Michael Campagna (research partners)
- Funding Agency: Safer Foundation (BJA passthrough)
- Funded Amount: \$100,000

Community Partners

- Project Harmony
- Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
- Nebraska Division of Parole Supervision
- Douglas County Department of Corrections
- Safer Foundation (Iowa)
- Associated Builders and Contractors
- Western Alternative Corrections: Bristol Station
- Mental Health Association
- Metropolitan Community College
- Mid-Plains Community College
- Nebraska Center for Workforce Development and Education
- ReConnect, Inc.
- Center for People in Need
- York College



CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSOR NAMED 2020 EARLY CAREER AWARD WINNER

Justin Nix, Ph.D., of the UNO School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, recently received an honor from the American Society of Criminology.

Justin Nix, Ph.D., associate professor within the UNO School of Criminology and Criminal Justice was named as the American Society of Criminology (ASC) Division of Policing as the "2020 Early Career Award" winner. The Early Career Award recognizes outstanding scholarly contributions to the field of policing by someone who has received his or her Ph.D. degree within the last five years.

Nix attributes this award to the good fortune of working with some exceptional colleagues, publishing timely and significant research in some of the field's most prestigious journals. He also shared, "It is a tremendous honor for me to be recognized alongside the previous five winners of this award – all of whom

I greatly admire. I feel inspired to continue pushing every day to be a better researcher, teacher, and colleague."

"We are fortunate to have Dr. Nix as part of our team," said Director and professor of the UNO School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Gaylene Armstrong, Ph.D. "He is among the nation's leading policing scholars seeking real-world solutions to crime and justice issues. National recognition of Dr. Nix's exemplary research is a credit to his hard work and collaborative approach. Nix is a fantastic mentor to our students and a positive, supportive colleague. This type of notoriety gained on the national stage benefits all of us in our continued effort to be one of

the top criminology and criminal justice programs in the nation!"

The American Society of Criminology (ASC) is an international organization whose members pursue scholarly, scientific, and professional knowledge concerning the measurement, etiology, consequences, prevention, control, and treatment of crime and delinquency. ASC's objectives are to encourage the exchange, in a multidisciplinary setting, of those engaged in research, teaching, and practice so as to foster criminological scholarship, and to serve as a forum for the dissemination of criminological knowledge. The Division of Policing was founded in 2014 and is now the largest division in ASC.

DIVISION OF CONTINUING STUDIES

[DCS.UNOMAHA.EDU]

OUR STUDENTS



49% female
51% male



52.3% self-identify as first generation college students



1,643 unduplicated student head count enrolled AY 18-19

18-65+

age range of students enrolled in the BMS degree program



24.4% DCS student population are military affiliated

Top 5 Areas of Concentration

1. General Administration
2. Library Science
3. Psychology
4. Criminal Justice
5. Behavioral Health

CUM GPA FOR SPRING 2020
CUM GPA 3.22 | 97 students with a 3.0+

CUM GPA FOR FALL 2020
3.2 Average GPA | 93 with 3.0+

GRADUATES PER SEMESTER

SPRING 2020
148

SUMMER 2020
70

FALL 2020
142

HONORS AND AWARDS

Student Honors Awards

- Ben Thornburg - Organizational Studies
- Samantha Salvatori - Political Science, minor in Non-Profit Management (Dec. 2020 graduate)
- Sarah Liassidi - Healthcare Administration
- Samantha Salvatori - CPACS Dean's Award
- Samantha Salvatori - Chancellor's Award for Academic Excellence
- Hannah Johnson - Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Student Leadership

DCS Staff Recognitions

- Kerry Fina: December, Academic Advising Council Advisor of the Month.
- Mindy Hunke: January, UNO Undergraduate Admissions Maverick Spirit Award have been matched to a student mentor.

CAMPUS Proposed Initiatives

- Badging & Stackable Credentials. Proposal submitted to UNO Office of Academic Affairs. March, 2021.
- Center for Advancement and Continuing Learning. Proposal and presentation submitted to UNO Diversity, Equity, Access and Inclusion call for concept papers. March, 2021.
- Online Tutoring: 24/7/361. Proposal submitted to UNO Office of Academic Affairs. March, 2021.
- Transforming, Renewing, Achieving, Connecting. Proposal and presentation submitted to UNO Diversity, Equity, Access and Inclusion call for concept papers. March, 2021.

Conferences, Presentations

- Billings, C. B. (2020, October 13). Cultivating passion and joy: Shifting a unit culture from seeking legitimacy to owning our awesome, from top down management to shared ownership and accountability. Association for Continuing Higher Education 82nd Annual Conference.
- Billings, C. B. & Paschall, A. (2020, October 12). Are your institutional reports helpful? Data basic for adult and post-traditional undergraduate degree programs. Association for Continuing Higher Education 82nd Annual Conference.
- Fina, K. (2020, October 12). Leading through relationships. Association for Continuing Higher Education 82nd Annual Conference.
- Paschall, A. (2021, March 16). Adult Friendly University Workshop. University of Nebraska at Omaha.



DCS SCORES NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH **AIR FORCE EDUCATION**

UNO's Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies (BMS) Degree is the newest partner with the Air Force's Education and Training Command.

The Air Force's Education and Training Command has recognized the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) as a General Education Mobile (GEM) partner and approved the Division of Continuing Studies Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies (BMS) Degree as an Air University Associate to Baccalaureate Cooperative (AU-ABC) degree program.

As a GEM partner, Airmen are able to complete UNO courses to satisfy general education courses toward their AAS degrees from the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF).

As an AU-ABC approved program, Airmen who earned obtained their CCAF degrees are able to transfer to UNO and complete the BMS program by completing 60 credit hours or less.

These programs exist to help Airman more easily navigate finding schools and degree programs where they can maximize their military education and training and more efficiently achieve their educational goals.

UNO and the Division of Continuing Studies have been serving military students for over 80 years and supporting their educational goals. As a result of the DCS office at Offutt Air Force Base, over 40% of the active duty Air Force students enrolled at UNO are enrolled in the BMS degree program. By formalizing our participation in GEM and AU-ABC, DCS continues to honor UNO's commitment to supporting active duty military members in seeking degree completion opportunities. These new partnerships build upon existing memorandums of understanding that enable service members to utilize their Department of Defense education benefits to offset the cost of attendance at UNO.

Aligned with our institutional mission to transform and improve quality of life locally, nationally, and globally, as well as the Division's mission to recognize the learning that adult and contemporary students gain throughout their life, we are honored to serve those who have served.

DEPARTMENT OF GERONTOLOGY

[GERO.UNOMAHA.EDU]

Top 5 Notable Gero Statistics

- 21 community presentations
- 17 published journal articles
- 3 book chapters
- 25 conference presentations
- 2 PhD graduates, 4 Master's graduates, 14 Bachelor's graduates in 2020-2021

MAJOR Awards & Honors

- Dr. Christopher Kelly appointed as Department Chair, July 2020
- Dr. Julie Blaskewicz Boron promoted to Professor
- Dr. Julie Masters, UNL Mortar Board Professor of the Month, March 2021
- Madeline Daley, Deans Award, UNO College of Public Affairs and Community Service
- Angela Gifford, Meritorious Award for Graduate Poster Presentation: "The Impact of Stress Management on Loneliness and Chronic Stress in Older Adults"
- Kennady Gustin, Honorable Mention, Graduate Oral Presentation: "Examination of Job Satisfaction of Aged Care Employees: A Systematic Review"

SYSTEMWIDE COLLABORATIONS

- Dr. Julie Masters, Dr. Lindsay Wilkinson, and Dr. Christopher Kelly: Ongoing work with UNK on understanding the effects of COVID-19 on community-dwelling older adults
- Dr. Amy Hanson and Dr. Christopher Kelly: UNO Access the Experts series

NEW FACULTY MEMBER

Dr. Lindsay Wilkinson, Assistant Professor, received her dual-title PhD in Sociology and Gerontology from Purdue University. Her research and teaching interests focus on aging and the life course, health inequalities, social stratification, and quantitative methods. She was a National Institute on Aging Predoctoral Fellow at Purdue's Center on Aging and the Life Course. In 2014, she received the Senior Service America Junior Scholar Award for Research Related to Disadvantaged Older Adults.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Dinesh Karki is our Champions of Aging Student Worker in Omaha. He came to the U.S. from Jhapa,



Nepal in 2009. As Dr. Jeffrey Gold, Chancellor of UNO described, Dinesh is "a civic engager for the good of all. He is fully committed to addressing barriers faced by refugee, migrant, and diverse students by facilitating opportunities for them to become

connected to the services and support needed to thrive. With a passion for education, he has come to understand how societal systems can work together to provide." Dinesh has been a member of our team for two years, focusing on our social media presence.

Sampling of Grants

- Dr. Janelle Beadle, PI, \$764,565 from the National Institutes of Health, National Institute of General Medical Sciences, COBRE Grant: Neural Basis of Empathy in Aging
- Dr. Janelle Beadle, PI, \$50,000, Great Plains IDEa-CTR Scholars Program Grant, The Psychological, Neural, and Hormonal Bases of Caregiver Compassion Fatigue
- Dr. Janelle Beadle, PI, \$42,451 Research Development Grant from UNO: Neuropsychiatric Symptoms in Alzheimer's Disease and Caregiver Stress
- Dr. Janelle Beadle, PI, \$20,000, University of Nebraska Collaboration Initiative, Interdisciplinary Care Transitions
- Dr. Julie Blaskewicz Boron, PI, \$73,000 Great Plains IDEa-CTR Pilot Grant, Age-Related Differences in Food Choices and Appetite Regulation in the Context of Exercise
- Dr. Julie Blaskewicz Boron, PI, \$20,000, University of Nebraska Collaboration Initiative, Enhancing Senior Living, Quality of Life, and Independence through Utilizing Assistive and Interactive Technology
- Dr. Julie Blaskewicz Boron, Co-PI, \$99,414, UNO-UNMC Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Collaborative Grant: Resiliency, Reserve, and Fatigability: Insights into Fall Risk
- Dr. Julie Blaskewicz Boron, Co-PI, \$50,000, UNMC Health Disparities VCR Pilot Grant: Optimizing Community Efforts to Improve Physical Activity in Aging
- Dr. Julie Blaskewicz Boron, Co-PI, \$38,250, Great Plains IDEa-CTR Pilot grant: Tailoring Interventions to Reduce Loneliness in Aging Adults through Voice Assistants
- Dr. Julie Blaskewicz Boron, Dr. Janelle Beadle, and Dr. Julie Masters, Co-PIs, \$1,592,000, UNO BIG Ideas, Transforming Wellness through Business, Informatics, and Gerontology
- Dr. Julie Masters, Dr. Lindsay Wilkinson, and Dr. Julie Blaskewicz Boron, \$5,000, UNO BIG Ideas, Exploring the Effects of COVID-19 on Persons Living in Senior Living Communities



GERONTOLOGY INTRODUCES NEW MASTER'S PROGRAM

A hectic year has not stopped the UNO Department of Gerontology from making waves and big changes to their degree programs.

The master's program within the UNO Department of Gerontology is not a new program, but rather a refreshed program with a brand new name.

The name change of the now Master of Arts in Gerontology, was prompted by the department's realization that gerontology faculty represents multiple disciplines, not just the social sciences. "We hope the name change will add to the growing numbers of students in our master's program, from disciplines that include biology, psychology, sociology, and public policy," says Director of the UNO Department of Gerontology, Dr. Christopher

Kelly. "The Master's in Gerontology reflects the broad, multidisciplinary nature of our faculty and our students. Our name change is timely because, as recent events demonstrate, aging occurs in multiple dimensions, and we prepare students for professional fields who are trained in the biological, psychological, and social aspects of aging."

Along with the new master's program name, leadership within the Department of Gerontology have big plans in store for the 2021 academic year. "We have a record number of bachelor's students in our program and we continue to grow our dual programs on the Omaha and Lincoln campuses," shares Dr. Kelly.

GOODRICH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

[GOODRICH.UNOMAHA.EDU]



Top 5 Notable Unit Accomplishments

1. 6-yr graduation rate for 2015 cohort currently 79.4% (projected 81%); (UNO's: 47%)
2. Our freshman/sophomore retention rate: 98.3%; (UNO's: 77%)
3. Spring 2020 semester: 55 students on Chancellor's List, 154 on Dean's List
4. Fall 2020 semester: 48 on Chancellor's List, 139 on Dean's List
5. Average GPA for Spring 2020: 3.51; Average GPA for Fall 2020: 3.391

MAJOR Awards & Honors

- First-Generation Vision Grant, Abishai Javier & Maggie Peterson
- UHOP: Eh Khaing, Ayush Chataut, Akankshya Chataut
- US Department of State Gilman Award, Karla Ponce-Merida
- NU Global Engagement Award, Joseph Saaid
- Department of Political Science Honors Student of the Year: Aya Yousuf
- Undergraduate Major Award for Kinesiology: Caitlyn Bartholomew
- College of Business Dean's Award and Management Department Student of the Year: Katie Moragues
- Outstanding Service Award as Kinesiology Major of the Year: Caitlyn Bartholomew
- Charles B Rangel Fellowship: Aya Yousuf
- Maverick Entrepreneurs of 2021: Gabriella Moore
- Selected as member of 43rd Army Band: Christine Robino
- PPIA Data Analytics Track at Carnegie Mellon: Maria Lizbeth Pérez Hernández
- Vice Chancellor, Student Success & EM AAPI Focus Group: Sabrina Salrín
- We welcomed our new assistant professor to the Goodrich Faculty - Dr. Stevie Siebert Dejarlais
- Dr. Todd Richardson being named a James R. Schumacher Chair of Ethics



Student Spotlight

Vanessa Chavez Jurado is a junior and Goodrich Scholar who has made an incredible impact in her short time on campus as the UNO Student Government Vice President, Compact Newman Civic Fellow, President and Co-Founder of First Forward, President of Teacher Education Diversity Organization, and Treasurer of NU Student Alliance.

A RECIPE FOR RESILIENCE

The University of Nebraska at Omaha has been Troy Romero's home for nearly 40 years - in more ways than one.

In May of 2021, Romero, whose doctorate is in psychology, began his tenure as chair of the Goodrich Scholarship Program. It's a role that he's seemingly been working towards his entire life, though he never would have thought so when he was a Goodrich Scholar, himself, in the early 1990s.

"I didn't take college seriously enough," he says. "I knew it was important, and I was capable of doing the work but I just wasn't ready."

The Goodrich Scholarship Program was formed nearly 50 years ago to support students who were high-achieving but otherwise at risk to finish their degrees. In that regard, John Bartle, Ph.D., the dean of the College of Public Affairs and Community Service, which houses Goodrich, says Romero's story is a true success story.

"It is poetic that we have produced our own leader. It is not just the pay-off of an investment, but it is a realization of the dream of the founders of Goodrich: Senator Glenn Goodrich, and CPACS Founding Dean Hubert Locke, as well as many others."

An Early Introduction

Like many Goodrich Scholars before and after him, Romero was a first-generation student, but he was actually quite familiar with the UNO campus. His parents worked as custodians in the 1980s and he'd sometimes tag along as they worked or took part in campus activities.

"The first time I ever went to UNO was on 'bring your kid to work day' and that's how I got introduced to the university."

Romero says that as he entered college he knew

he'd need to support himself so he applied for scholarships. It wasn't until his second year, after losing a different scholarship, that he applied for - and received - a Goodrich scholarship. That was when everything changed.

Unlike many scholarships, being a Goodrich Scholar not only covers nearly all tuition and fees, but it also places you in a cohort with a specialized two-year curriculum and provides access to dedicated academic and non-academic support services.

"It's hard to explain now because I have the ability to be retrospective and look back, but I remember the content was engaging and I was able to connect with the professors."

One of those professors was Mike Carroll, Ph.D., who has since retired but kept in regular contact with Romero.

"I first met Troy when I had him in an English Composition class in 1994. Now, he's been a friend of mine for over two decades."

Carroll says Romero's passion and dedication to

others shown through early on and it's no surprise that he's come full circle as Goodrich chair.

"He's always had a real dedication to service and outreach. I think that's one of the key reasons he decided to stay in education - to provide service to the community and interact with our students."

Home is Where the Heart Is

Romero never imagined himself as one of those same professors that he relied on as a student, but as he was pursuing a terminal degree in psychology, also at UNO, he was presented an opportunity to be a graduate teaching assistant within the Goodrich program.

"At the time I didn't know something like that existed, where you could get money, work for the program, and connect with students while earning your degree," he says. "But it was great. Being a Goodricher made it easier for me to work with those students."

Bartle says that connection is one of the things that has helped make Romero so successful in the classroom.

"As a Goodrich alum, he has seen the program from every angle, and can empathize with the Goodrich scholars because he was one. Like all Goodrich faculty and staff, he goes well above and beyond to help them when they are in crisis, need a job, or need a nudge."

A Recipe for Resilience

Despite plans to leave, Romero was lured back with another scholarship opportunity, this one to pay for his doctorate as he continued to teach for UNO, which he did. Now, 20 years after his first teaching assignment, Romero is leading the program that gave him the opportunities and support he needed as an undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral student.

"I think what Goodrich does so well is build resilient students," Romero says. "You've got to be resilient because something is going to happen in your lifetime and it's not going to be easy. Who would have expected where we're at now, living through a pandemic the likes of which we haven't seen in 100 years? The circumstances change over time, but the need for resiliency stays the same."

"If you believe in education, you believe in Goodrich," Bartle adds. "I am very proud of the history and excited for the future, because programs like this embody the American dream."

"I'm sure Troy would say that, after struggling in his first year, he lucked into the Goodrich Program, and that may be true," Carroll says. "But I've also never seen someone work as hard as Troy has to make that same luck happen for others."

For his part, Romero says he'll be standing on the shoulders of former chairs, a mere eight to be exact, who have made the Goodrich Program what it is today: a learning community that has survived nearly five decades, helped graduate nearly 2,000 of at-risk students, and outpaced student retention and graduation rates locally and nationwide. He wants to do for the next generation what Goodrich did for him nearly 30 years ago.

"When I was able to share my story for the first time, in a Goodrich class, and be supported - that was so important. It's what grounds me at UNO, and at Goodrich. That's what I want to cultivate in our students."



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

[SPA.UNOMAHA.EDU]

NATIONAL RANKINGS

#28

AMONG OTHER
ACCREDITED
MASTER OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION
PROGRAMS

PUBLIC FINANCE AND BUDGETING	#8
LOCAL GOVERNMENT	#11
NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT	#12
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT	#24

MAJOR Student, Alumni Honors & Awards

- PhD student, Felipe Blanco was named a 2021 Rising Graduate Scholars by *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* magazine.
- Our recent MPA graduate, Yuriko Doku, was selected as a marshal for the December 2020 Commencement.
- We are proud of our MPA alum, Lieutenant Neal Bonacci. He is the new commander of the OPD Public Information Office.
- MPA student, Marissa Cuellar, was selected as the recipient of the Claire Parker Phi Delta Gamma Scholarship for 2021-2022.

Top 5 Notable MPA Accomplishments

1. We are excited to announce the new Health and Social Policy concentration. This replaces the previous health care administration concentration.
2. The Pandemic Course: This new course was a huge success!
3. New Masters of Public Administration Faculty: We welcomed two new MPA faculty this year. While it has been a nontraditional start in that we are not on campus, Drs. Bárbara Gómez-Aguíñaga and Danbee Lee have gotten off to a great start!
4. COVID-19 Engagement and Response Discussion: On our existing MPA Hub, we launched an open-ended "COVID-19 Engagement and Response" discussion. We had around 25 students participating in this discussion.
5. MPA Alum Lands National Position: MPA Graduate, Kyle McGlade, was recently selected for the Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF). His position will be with the U.S. General Services Administration in the Northeast/Caribbean region. Congrats, Kyle!

MSUS Enrollment Growth

The Masters of Science Urban Studies (MSUS) program enrollment grew by 21% from last spring 2020. It also saw an increase in student diversity as the MSUS Committee, MSUS Advisory Board, alumni, and faculty worked to promote growth in the student population to reflect a 21st Century demographic more reflective of Omaha and the nation at large. Currently, 52% of students identify as underrepresented minorities, up from just 21% last year.



PhD 25 Years of Excellence

This year, the Ph.D. Program celebrates 25 Years of excellence. In our 25th year of sponsoring the Ph.D. in Public Administration, we saw our largest graduating class yet. Our eight students have come from all over the United States, and several countries. We wish them the best as they pursue their future. More than 50 graduated from the program.

Professional Programs Top Accomplishments

- Facilitated the Sarpy County Core Values discussion over a course of three months.
- Held the Great Plains Government Finance Officers Association Conference (GPGFOA) virtually for 82 people.
- The Certificate in Fundraising Management is now under the leadership of the School of Public Administration.
- Collaborated with the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, University of Eastern Illinois, and Rutgers Center for Government Services to provide virtual training over six weeks for Municipal Clerks across the country.
- 12 Certified Public Managers (CPM) graduated from the program in December.
- Professional Programs received a two-year extension to provide Sarpy County with the CPM program.



UNO ONE OF FOUR CAMPUSES LAUNCHING INNOVATIVE PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAM

VOLUNTEER LEAD
#UNOSERVES

This fall will mark the beginning of a new era in UNO's commitment to community engagement and educating the next generation of public stewards.

Through a partnership with the Volcker Alliance, a nationally known nonprofit supporting advancement of the public sector workforce, and Arizona State University, UNO has formally launched the Next Generation Service Partnership (NextGen Service).

The new initiative aims to expand public service-learning experiences for undergraduate students. UNO is one of the first three universities across the country to participate with more campuses soon to be added.

Housed in the School of Public Administration (SPA) within the College of Public Affairs and Community Service (CPACS), the project is led jointly by CPACS and the College of Business Administration (CBA) at UNO.

"SPA is known for its high-quality undergraduate and graduate programming as well for appreciating the importance of community engagement," said Craig Maher, Ph.D., director of SPA. "A challenge we are seeing for students and organizations is a need to train students to lead across sectors – public, private, and nonprofit."

As the first stage of this new effort, a new Cross-Sector Collaborative Leadership Minor has been developed and is open to any undergraduate with

100 credits or less, regardless of major, beginning in Fall 2021.

Unlike many other minors, students enrolled in the NextGen minor will form a cohort taking uniquely designed courses taught by leaders from all three sectors (public, private, nonprofit), as well as UNO faculty members. Future plans for the initiative include tailored internships, workshops, conferences, service projects, and more.

"The most pressing community challenges require working across the three sectors. The need for collaboration and utilizing networks across different sectors are key to solving community problems," said Meagan Van Gelder, Ed.D., academic program coordinator for SPA and NextGen Service. "The Omaha metro area and the UNO campus are a perfect pair for launching NextGen Service."

Students interested in being a part of NextGen Service can apply for \$500 scholarships to support their tuition and fees.

In addition to UNO, the first group of NextGen Service university partners include the City University of New York, Georgia State University, and Indiana University.

For more information about the Leadership in Public Service Minors and scholarships, contact the NextGen Service and UNO SPA program coordinator.

AVIATION INSTITUTE

[AVIATION.UNOMAHA.EDU]



Top 5

Notable Unit Accomplishments

1. The Aviation Institute (UAS program) was selected to be one of institutions of the FAA UAS Collegiate Training Initiative.
2. NU President, Ted Carter, has been named an honorary faculty member within the Aviation Institute.
3. Spring 2020 semester: 55 students on Chancellor's List, 154 on Dean's List
4. Fall 2020 semester: 48 on Chancellor's List, 139 on Dean's List
5. Two outstanding alumni were named as the Aviation Institute Alumni Award winners, Ryan Goertzen and Katie Wrobel.

MAJOR Awards & Honors

- Dr. Becky Lutte: 99s Award of Achievement for Contribution to Aviation
- Scott Nugent: Alpha Eta Rho National Student President
- Scott Vlasek: Alpha Eta Rho National President

Community Partnerships

- The Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) program collaborates with Omaha Drone Services LLC. on UAS student internship (Joey Poppleton has been working part-time with ODS for over a year)
- UAS program collaborates with NDOT Division of Aeronautics on UAS student internship of UAS based airport inspection (Jason Chan and John Koch)
- Omaha Burke High School Air & Space Academy

NASA NEBRASKA SPACE GRANT

Top 5 Funding Sources & Accomplishments

1. NASA EPSCoR funding this year of \$150,000, with \$175,000 expected next year.
2. New NASA Nebraska Space Grant funding of \$700,000, with \$800,000 expected next year.
3. More than \$150,000 has been awarded to 40 NASA Nebraska Space Grant student fellows across the state this year.
4. Seven students (to date) have been placed in paid internships at NASA Ames Research Center, NASA JPL, Honeybee Robotics, and the Nebraska Division of Aeronautics.
5. Over 690 students attended the 2020 virtual space camp.

NASA Nebraska EPSCoR Highlights

The NASA Nebraska EPSCoR program funded Seed Research MiniGrants to faculty members at Creighton University, the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK), the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), and the University of Nebraska at Omaha. These mini-grants are intended to grow productive collaborative relationships with NASA researchers to stimulate cooperative scientific inquiry that contributes to NASA's strategic research and technology priorities. Dr. Congrui Jin, UNL Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, is researching construction of locally available materials on Mars in combination with the use of

genetically engineered fungi as building agents. Synthetic microbiology toolkits are used to engineer fungi to create useful minerals via biomineralization and grow them into living building blocks that could bring our extraterrestrial buildings to life. Engineered fungal cells are nanomachines that constantly sense their environment, draw from a plethora of energy sources and simplistic molecular building blocks, and refashion the molecules into new structurally and functionally more complex materials. If successful, rather than transporting construction materials from Earth to Mars with incredibly high costs, fungi could rapidly grow new structures for interplanetary colonization based on in-situ raw materials on Mars.

Community Partnerships

The NASA Nebraska Space Grant has a long-time partnership with the Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC) which serves the Santee and Omaha Nations through 3 campuses in Nebraska. Last year, we took two faculty and one student from NICC to Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) to establish collaborations with NASA for the NICC Prairie Restoration and Climate Change Projects. This trip resulted in the development of a dedicated virtual collaboration space on Microsoft Teams where we have met virtually on a regular basis to continue discussions and make progress towards advancing NICC's research capabilities. This collaboration has led to partnerships with MUREP, DOE, DOD, USDA, & NEFA. NICC is implementing drone technology to expand their research with the help of Chris Cruz, National Geospatial Technology Center of Excellence; Bonnie Murray, MUREP; and Matthew Pierce, Goddard Institute of Space Studies at Columbia University. In addition to these collaborations, the NASA Nebraska Space Grant has funded many student fellowships at NICC's three campuses.

THE FUTURE OF FLIGHT IN A POST-COVID WORLD

UNO's own Becky Lutte, Ph.D., associate professor of aviation, is an expert in recruitment and retention of women in aviation, as well as aviation safety policy. Last year, Lutte was also asked to join the newly-formed Federal Aviation Administration Women in Aviation Advisory Board.

As we look back at the last year and toward the future of safe travel, here are some observations and predictions provided by Prof. Lutte:

When will it be safe to fly again?

My short answer is that it's safe to fly now. The airline industry and airports have taken great steps to create the safest environment that they can. I've personally traveled a couple times during the pandemic and it's really all about passenger compliance - making sure everyone is following the rules and being aware of what's expected from us.

I think the vaccine is going to further enhance people's comfort level of getting out there and traveling again by air.

What should airline travelers be prepared for if they do decide to fly, either now or in the immediate future?

I think general best practices for travel at this time are really just knowing and following the guidelines in place. Things like wearing a mask and physical distancing, especially during the pre-boarding phase, if you can, and when you get on the plane as well. My standard is that I board later if I can because I'm able to distance in line better.

Many airlines provide antibacterial wipes when you enter the airplane and I always wipe down everything from the seatbelt to the arm rest to the upper buttons and tray table. So, really it's just following protocols and being smart about it.

Do you think proof of the COVID vaccine will be required to travel by air in the future?

I don't anticipate a vaccine requirement for domestic travel. I think this will remain a bigger priority for international travel.

One of the things I'm really fascinated about that we are seeing is the development of a digital health passport, for aviation in particular. Basically it is an app that allows passengers to quickly see what the COVID requirements are for the country they are traveling to and also upload their COVID test results or vaccination records. If you want to talk short-term versus long-term consequences of COVID-19, this could be the long-term new normal.

What do you think the other long-term impact to the airline industry is going to be?

Well, COVID-19 has decimated the passenger-carrying industry worldwide, without a doubt. Here are just a couple of statistics: Global losses for airlines in 2020 were \$118 billion; overall demand for international airline services was down 66 percent in 2020 compared to 2019; and at the peak of the downturn, we were close to 50 percent of planes being parked because there just hasn't been demand.

The forecast for an industry comeback is about 2023 or 2024, to get back to pre-COVID levels of travel. The future still looks strong. Boeing is forecasting the need for over 43,000 new aircraft deliveries globally over the next 20 years.

How about parts of the industry that aren't focused on passenger travel?

There are certainly areas in the industry that are actually doing better than the passenger-carrying side. One example is private jet transport, which is used often for business or corporate travel and more people are exploring this option for the security,

flexibility, and convenience.

The cargo-carrying market has also fared much better than the passenger-carrying market. In 2020 just over 2 billion people worldwide shopped online during the pandemic and a large percentage of those goods are getting there by air. Just recently, January 2021, air cargo demand returned to pre-COVID levels for the first time.

What does the future look like for aviation students?

Actually, students today are really well positioned, especially those just starting in our program because they are going to be hitting the market at a time when you should see that hiring start to ramp up again. I would definitely encourage any current students or future students who are interested to stay the course.

Long-term, the same increased need for pilots is going to be there because demand will return combined with a heavy number of retirements over the next 10 years, which is going to create a demand for pilots. In fact, the Boeing forecast says that there will be a demand for 763,000 new pilots worldwide over the next 20 years.

Given your expertise in industry trends, especially for hiring more women, will there be any impact due to COVID on the move towards diversifying who works in these fields?

As I mentioned, the industry is going to need to meet workforce demand in many areas, flight, maintenance, engineering, management, finance, airport operations, and so on. To reach these goals, they are going to need to tap into a large community and that is going to include women and underrepresented groups.

The industry continues efforts to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce. As evidence, I am a member of the FAA Women in Aviation Advisory Board working to increase the numbers of women in the field. So, yes, there are many opportunities for women and I think this is a great time for women in aviation, perhaps the best I've seen in the 30 years or so that I've been a part of the industry.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & DISASTER SCIENCE

EMGT.UNOMAHA.EDU

The UNO Emergency Management and Disaster Science program develops skills in preventing, planning and preparing for, responding to, and recovering from large scale natural or man-made disasters and public events that require inter-agency and/or inter-jurisdictional involvement. The program also offers three undergraduate minors: Emergency Management, Fire Service Management and Tribal Management and Emergency Services. A certificate in Tribal Management and Emergency Services is also available.

Top 5 Notable Unit Accomplishments

1. Hired Dr. Namkyung Oh as program chair.
2. Gained three new internship opportunities for students, including: Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Pottawattamie County Emergency Management, and the Omaha Correctional Center.
3. Published six publications from two faculty.
4. 39 students earned a BS in EMGT in 2020/2021.
5. 16 students earned a certificate in Tribal Management and Emergency Services.

MAJOR Accomplishments

Dr. Tom Jamieson

- Cortés, J.J., & Jamieson, T. (2020). Incorporating Research Design in Public Diplomacy: The Role of Listening to Foreign Publics. *International Journal of Communication*, 14, 1214-1231.
- Van Belle, D.A., & Jamieson, T. (2020). Imperial Pandemicide. *Social Science Quarterly*, 101 (5), 1995-2000.
- Jamieson, T. (2020). 'Go Hard, Go Early': Preliminary Lessons from New Zealand's Response to COVID-19. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 50 (6-7), 598-605.
- American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Virtual Meeting, 2020.
- USC Center for Economic and Social Research COVID-19 Work in Progress Conference, Virtual Meeting, 2020.

Dr. Namkyung Oh

- Oh, N., & Lee, J. (2020). Changing landscape of emergency management research: A systematic review with bibliometric analysis. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 101658. (SSCI)
- Oh, N. (2020). Collective Decision-Making for Developing Emergency Management Capabilities. *International Journal of Emergency Services (SCOPUS)*.
- Lee, J., Hoornbeek, J., & Oh, N. (2020). Social Cognitive Orientations, Social Support, and Physical Activity among at-Risk Urban Children: Insights from a Structural Equation Model. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(18), 6745. (SSCI).
- Elected as ASPA Section on Emergency and Crisis Management Board member.

Dr. Ed Zendejas

- Ed was part of a US Commission of Civil Rights panel organized by UNO's Dr. Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado.

#8

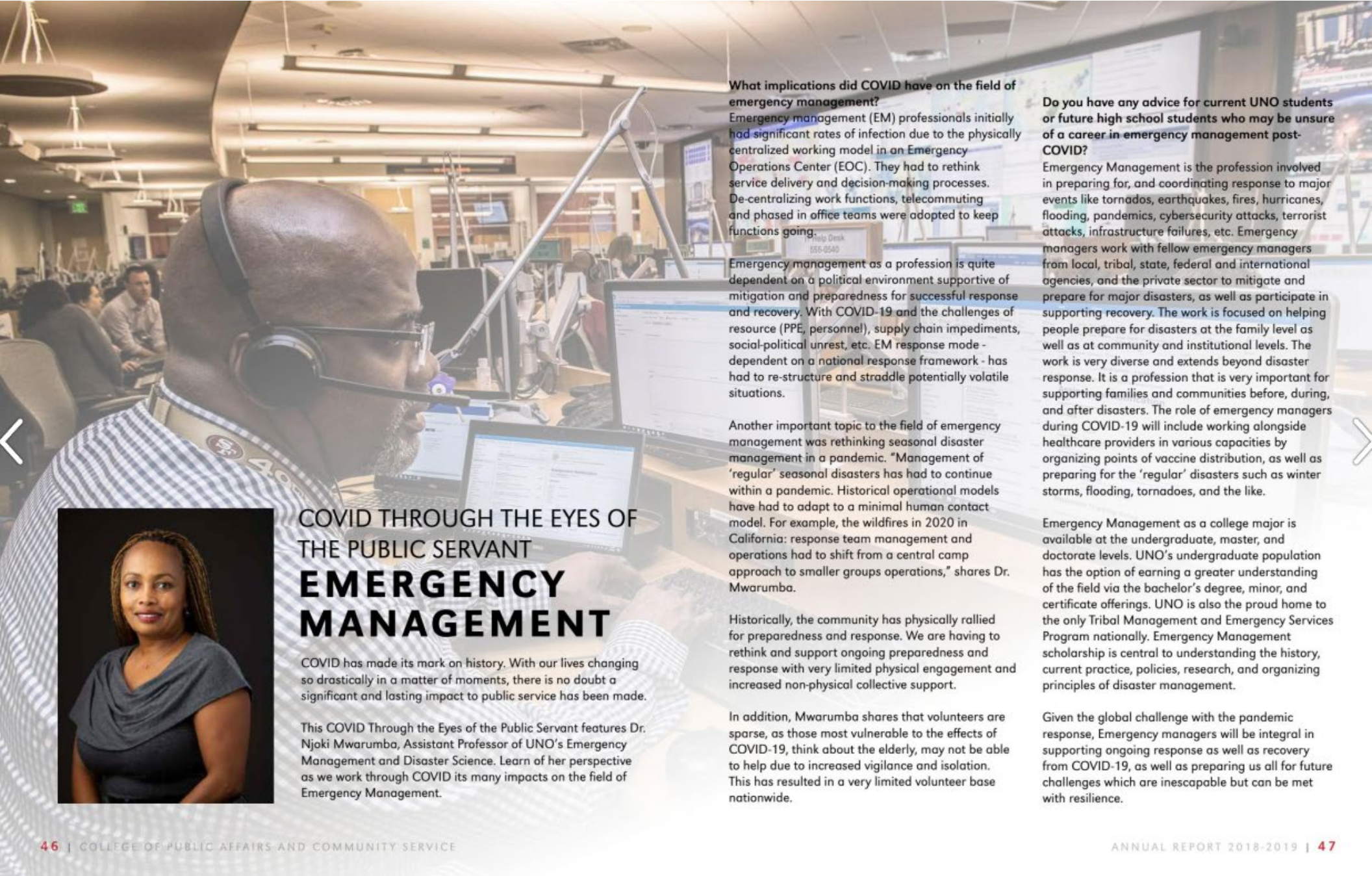
ACCORDING TO AFFORDABLE SCHOOLS: 20 BEST AFFORDABLE ONLINE BACHELOR'S EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEGREE PROGRAMS

TRIBAL MANAGEMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES

UNO's Tribal Management and Emergency Services Program offers a minor and a certificate. It is led by Dr. Edouardo Zendejas along with Adjunct Professor, Cindy Krafka.

MAJOR Awards & Honors

- **TV Show Hosts:** Ed and Cindy host a weekly local TV show, "Native Honor Hours." The goal of the show is to spotlight positive Native American achievement both locally and at a national level.
- **Featured in a Webinar:** "Native Images and Struggles Over Representations: A Conversation with Edouardo Zendejas, JD" (Omaha) and was held in November, 2020; sponsored by the Center for Indigenous Community Engagement, Northwestern State University.
- **Partnership News:** Ed and Cindy have developed a working partnership with Union Pacific's Council on Native American Heritage (CONAH). This is a group of employees with Native American heritage or an interest in the Indian culture. CONAH's mission is to assist Union Pacific with the recruitment, retention and development of employees with Native American heritage.
- **Local School Partnerships:** TMES has a working partnership with Omaha Public Schools, specifically the Native Indigenous Centered Education (NICE) program. This is a program for the native students within the district.
- **Native Chancellors Cabinet Meetings:** TMES sends bi-annually a representative to the Native Chancellors Cabinet meetings; meetings between the Native community and the Chancellor to exchange ideas and comments. Cindy is also present at these meetings for her role as an adjunct professor and an elder in the Native community.
- TMES is housed in the Barbera Weitz Community Engagement Center (CEC). This keeps us engaged with many different community entities within the Omaha area.



What implications did COVID have on the field of emergency management?

Emergency management (EM) professionals initially had significant rates of infection due to the physically centralized working model in an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). They had to rethink service delivery and decision-making processes. De-centralizing work functions, telecommuting and phased in office teams were adopted to keep functions going.

Emergency management as a profession is quite dependent on a political environment supportive of mitigation and preparedness for successful response and recovery. With COVID-19 and the challenges of resource (PPE, personnel), supply chain impediments, social-political unrest, etc. EM response mode - dependent on a national response framework - has had to re-structure and straddle potentially volatile situations.

Another important topic to the field of emergency management was rethinking seasonal disaster management in a pandemic. "Management of 'regular' seasonal disasters has had to continue within a pandemic. Historical operational models have had to adapt to a minimal human contact model. For example, the wildfires in 2020 in California: response team management and operations had to shift from a central camp approach to smaller groups operations," shares Dr. Mwarumba.

Historically, the community has physically rallied for preparedness and response. We are having to rethink and support ongoing preparedness and response with very limited physical engagement and increased non-physical collective support.

In addition, Mwarumba shares that volunteers are sparse, as those most vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19, think about the elderly, may not be able to help due to increased vigilance and isolation. This has resulted in a very limited volunteer base nationwide.

Do you have any advice for current UNO students or future high school students who may be unsure of a career in emergency management post-COVID?

Emergency Management is the profession involved in preparing for, and coordinating response to major events like tornados, earthquakes, fires, hurricanes, flooding, pandemics, cybersecurity attacks, terrorist attacks, infrastructure failures, etc. Emergency managers work with fellow emergency managers from local, tribal, state, federal and international agencies, and the private sector to mitigate and prepare for major disasters, as well as participate in supporting recovery. The work is focused on helping people prepare for disasters at the family level as well as at community and institutional levels. The work is very diverse and extends beyond disaster response. It is a profession that is very important for supporting families and communities before, during, and after disasters. The role of emergency managers during COVID-19 will include working alongside healthcare providers in various capacities by organizing points of vaccine distribution, as well as preparing for the 'regular' disasters such as winter storms, flooding, tornadoes, and the like.

Emergency Management as a college major is available at the undergraduate, master, and doctorate levels. UNO's undergraduate population has the option of earning a greater understanding of the field via the bachelor's degree, minor, and certificate offerings. UNO is also the proud home to the only Tribal Management and Emergency Services Program nationally. Emergency Management scholarship is central to understanding the history, current practice, policies, research, and organizing principles of disaster management.

Given the global challenge with the pandemic response, Emergency managers will be integral in supporting ongoing response as well as recovery from COVID-19, as well as preparing us all for future challenges which are inescapable but can be met with resilience.

COVID THROUGH THE EYES OF THE PUBLIC SERVANT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

COVID has made its mark on history. With our lives changing so drastically in a matter of moments, there is no doubt a significant and lasting impact to public service has been made.

This COVID Through the Eyes of the Public Servant features Dr. Njoki Mwarumba, Assistant Professor of UNO's Emergency Management and Disaster Science. Learn of her perspective as we work through COVID its many impacts on the field of Emergency Management.



FINDING THE STRENGTH TO SUCCEED: SAIGE ANGLETON

UNO is home to more than 6,000 first-generation students – 37 percent of the entire 15,000-plus student body – each with their own stories. One of those stories is Saige Angleton.

The emergency management major initially chose UNO for its proximity to home, so in the event the college experience wasn't what she had hoped, she would have family nearby as a support system. As a first-generation student, she admittedly struggled to find her footing early on, but when she became familiar with UNO's reverence toward students like her and the support network the university provided for students like her, it helped felt more at home.

"As I got progressively into college here, first-generation students are celebrated," Angleton said. "There is a First-Generation Guild, those students are definitely prioritized, and you have a family within it."

During her time at UNO, she helped launch the UNO men's club hockey team and served as its vice president. She also took on an internship with the Omaha Veterans Affairs Medical Center where she worked with the emergency manager on emergency planning. The COVID-19 pandemic proved to be a useful learning experience that will serve her well in her dream career as a nurse practitioner.

"For pandemic planning, we learned some things that we can take into the future and actually have pandemic plans for our careers as emergency managers," she said.

Overcoming a number of challenges, she experienced during her academic career has helped her create her own definition of what Maverick Spirit means.

"The word Maverick to me just means strong and I think Maverick Spirit overall means strength and being able to keep continuing," she said. "I know for a lot of college students, that's something they struggle with. College is very hard and sometimes you want to just give up, but I think having that Maverick Spirit and continuing to push yourself and persevere through those challenging times is what the Maverick Spirit is."

Looking back on her evolution from an unsure first-generation freshman to UNO graduate with a passion for serving others, she did it for more than her own benefit.

"I have two younger sisters that I know look up to me, and I know that I need to set the tone for them and show them how things should be done. I think I've done a great job at that so far, so that's definitely been what my strength to succeed is."

GRACE ABBOTT SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

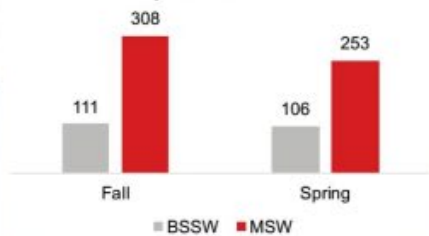
[SOCIALWORK.UNOMAHA.EDU]



ENGAGED, DIVERSE, READY FOR SERVICE

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted every aspect of daily life, especially for workplaces, families, and students in college. The 2020-2021 academic year was faced with new challenges as professors had to shift courses to 100 percent remote or online learning to ensure the safety of both students and staff. Additionally, the practicum office in GASSW had to make swift changes and be flexible to ensure students were meeting their required hours.

Total Students by Semester



FACULTY RECOGNITION

Dr. Jeanette Harder co-authored a book with Allen Hoover, entitled *For the Sake of a Child: Love, Safety, and Abuse in Plain Communities* (Ridgeway Publishing). This book discusses types of child abuse and neglect, and how children in Amish and Old Order Mennonite families and communities are uniquely safe, and how they might also be vulnerable.

PRACTICUM REPORT

The GASSW practicum office held the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 practicum fair virtually by having students complete a practicum fair agency exploration form.

Fall 2020

- 139 students in practicum (39 BSSW, 82 UNO MSW, 18 UNK MSW)
- 96 agencies in Omaha, Lincoln, greater Nebraska, and Iowa

Spring 2021

- 121 students in practicum (37 BSSW, 76 UNO MSW, 8 UNK MSW)
- 74 agencies in Omaha, Lincoln, greater Nebraska, and Iowa

\$56,000

**THROUGH 34 SCHOLARSHIPS
WERE AWARDED TO GASSW
STUDENTS IN 2020-2021**



**GASSW
HAD 52
GRADUATES
IN FALL 2020**

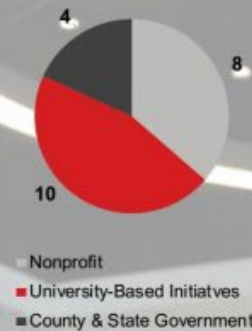


**1/3 OF GASSW
STUDENTS
ARE FIRST
GENERATION**

STEPS: Support and Training for the Evaluation of Programs

STEPS is a university-based program evaluation center in the Grace Abbott School of Social Work, with offices in the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center. Founded in 2013 by current Project Director and GASSW Professor Dr. Jeanette Harder, STEPs employs graduate students, staff, faculty, and alumni to lead and conduct evaluation projects. STEPs' mission is to promote evidence-informed decision making through research and evaluation. Using a collaborative, utilization-focused approach, STEPs supports social service programs and policies that transform and improve lives. Learn more about STEPs at steps.unomaha.edu.

Bringing in over **\$200,000** in 2020, STEPs made a significant and positive impact on many organizations and many people's lives in Nebraska.



Student Spotlight: Heather Spaur

Heather Spaur is a strong advocate for people with mental illness and passionate about reducing stigma of mental illness and disabilities. She has organized



a mental health awareness day for the last three years to include organizing sponsors for the event and connecting people with mental illness with valuable resources. She is active in the community through promoting mental health by bringing a platform to connect the business community and leaders in

our area, Chamber, Rotary, etc. with people in need. From Heather: "Being so vocal and an advocate for mental health, has brought so many people to me in our community that needs help, advice, services, etc."

This year due to COVID, she is creating a resource guide in lieu of a live event. She has contacted past vendors at our awareness day, agencies in the community, and our chamber of commerce. She plans to categorize these books, so that when someone gets a diagnosis or they have a specific need, they can easily find options for the services and how to access them. She plans to print and distribute these books for free to our community through community sponsorship.

HAIL AND FAREWELL

- Yadira Hernandez left GASSW in 2020.
- Amy West left GASSW as a full-time faculty member in 2020 but remains an adjunct for GASSW.
- Yiwei Zhang and Emily Soener joined GASSW as faculty members during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Sonia Carbonell joined GASSW as the Student Services Administrator in 2020.
- Avery Geisler moved from GASSW student worker to the Graduate Assistant to the Director in 2020.
- Kerry Beldin retired Spring 2021. Faculty unanimously voted to bestow her with Professor Emeritus status.



RETIRED DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM **RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

Dr. Amanda Duffy Randall was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Association of Social Workers-Nebraska Chapter during their virtual event on September 24-25, 2020.

Dr. Randall retired on June 30, 2020, from her role as Director of the Grace Abbott School of Social Work (GASSW) at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). Prior to becoming the director, Dr. Randall held a variety of positions within the GASSW, including as an esteemed faculty member, Coordinator of the Master of Social Work program, and Chair of the Council on Social Work Accreditation Self-Study Committee.

She displayed her compassion for various communities in the Omaha area, especially the LGBTQ population. Beyond the local social work community, Dr. Randall represented the profession at the highest levels by serving on the Association of Social Work Boards.

Throughout Dr. Randall's career, she demonstrated the highest form of social work values and ethics at every turn. She was not only a leader within the field but also a trailblazer.

ON LABOR DAY, LET'S HONOR LABOR'S IMPORTANT ROLE IN SOCIETY

As seen in the Omaha World-Herald Midlands Voices on September 7, 2020 by UNO's Director of the William Brennan Institute for Labor Studies, John Kretzschmar.

No matter where we live, or what we look like, most of us believe that if you work for a living you ought to earn a living, and that if you go to work, you shouldn't have to focus on whether you have been needlessly infected and are bringing that infection back home with you to your family and friends. Ironically, on Labor Day in 2020, both are real concerns for everyday wage earners, and both are core concerns of the American labor movement. Labor unions in the U.S. actually date back to the colonial era. And it was the Gilded Age when unions began to take off. The economic power awakened in the aftermath of the Civil War saw those who sell their intelligence, experience and strength to an employer to earn a living swell to over half the workforce.

The Gilded Age is notable for the huge contrasts it created in the populace. There were "Robber Barons" and "Huddled Masses Yearning to Breathe Free." One group had the political power to shape public policy focusing on the economy as it saw fit. The other larger group was powerless to do much of anything until they began organizing labor unions. There were large labor strikes in steel, rail and other emerging industries elevating the national appreciation for the importance of organized labor. Finally in 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed a bill declaring Labor Day a federal holiday. It is a day dedicated to the reality that everyday wage earners need an independent voice in the workplace, and that the "best friend" of Main Street merchants is a well-compensated workforce.

So, now we come to a time where the economic hardships plaguing everyday wage earners is, in some minds, potentially the worst economic downturn since the 1930s. Add to that, the fear that

just going to work is dangerous to you and your family's health, and the future looks truly daunting. What about the American labor movement? What does it exist to do? How does it go about accomplishing its goals?

Samuel Gompers was the first president of the American Federation of Labor. He was asked about what labor wants, and his reply became organized labor's first mission statement: "What do we want? More schoolhouses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning, less crime; more leisure, less greed; more justice, less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures."

Organized labor exists to challenge the economy in ways that puts a fair shot at the American Dream within the reach of all who sell their intelligence,

experience and strength to earn a living both union and non-union. Unions negotiate binding labor agreements with their employers. Those agreements, in most instances, cover issues of wages, hours of work, and other terms and conditions of employment. In the current environment, health and safety are a mandatory item of bargaining, and are first and foremost in many union members' minds.

In Nebraska, packing plants have been the centers of virus spread. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration was created because history revealed that employers, left to their own devices, appeared to put the well-being of their employees on the back burner. In this crisis, OSHA, which exists to address workplace health and safety with enforceable guidelines, has issued unenforceable "suggestions" for employers, who are dealing with COVID-19 exposures.

In union workplaces, because health and safety is a mandatory item of bargaining, unions have a voice

in how the employer chooses to respond to OSHA suggestions. What about the others, who go to work every day and also are without the protection of a union contract? Service workers all across the economy are vulnerable and without meaningful democracy in their workplaces. In this year, facing this pandemic, it's time for them to consider forming a union in their workplaces.

In a non-union workplace, employers are guided by the default in U.S. labor relations: at-will-employment. Under this doctrine, employers have the unilateral right to determine how to respond to OSHA's unenforceable "suggestions." They may choose to implement or not, often depending on how the safeguards affect the ability to make a profit for owner/investors.

So, as we contemplate the first federal holiday of the fall, let's think about organized labor's contributions. They brought us the weekend. They created the ladders that allowed those everyday wage earners climb out of poverty and into the middle class. They worked to get OSHA enacted over the objections of employers.

Unions are perhaps one of the most misunderstood institutions in our society, but on Labor Day, let us hope they can once again create those ladders that this troubling economy holds for Nebraska employee and employers.

*Photo: Members of Iron Workers Local 21 march in the Septemberfest Labor Day Parade in Omaha on Sept. 2, 2019, KEVIN COFFEY/THE WORLD-HERALD

WILLIAM BRENNAN INSTITUTE FOR LABOR STUDIES

[LABORSTUDIES.UNOMAHA.EDU]

CPACS' William Brennan Institute for Labor Studies has, since its inception in 1980, been the premier resource for "all things union" in the State of Nebraska.

In 1980, a new public service outreach program was established at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The William Brennan Institute for Labor Studies was created with a statewide mission "to foster critical and creative thinking among labor leaders, potential leaders, and interested members by providing relevant information and training in the skills necessary for success in today's economy and workplace."



The Institute acts as a bridge extending the resources of the university to the broader Nebraska community thereby making its resources more readily available to Nebraskans and their labor organizations.

The Institute's primary audience is the women and men of Nebraska's labor movement. Over time, a secondary audience emerged. As a result the Institute also does programming aimed at educating Nebraskans about the role organized labor did to create an economy where the American Dream is available to those, who work hard and play by the rules.

To accomplish its mandate, the Institute provides university-quality programs of teaching, research, and community service for labor organizations at the local, state, regional, and national levels, as well as educational offerings to expand public awareness about why organized labor exists, what it exists to accomplish, and what tools it uses to put the American Dream within reach of everyday wage earners. Classes and other educational offerings take place off- and on-campus.



Presentation Recap

Zoom presentations of class material prepared for the Nebraska Center for Workforce Development and Education for the past year covered the

following topics:

- Union Rights are Human Rights
- Effective Messaging Techniques
- Understanding Organized Labor
- Common Sense Economics
- Labor History
- Tackling Member Apathy
- Explaining the Proper Role of Government
- Introduction to Collective Bargaining
- How Unions Do What They Do
- Steward Training

Notable Achievements

- Op-Eds published in the Omaha World Herald on the Protect the Right to Organize Act, which is before Congress
- Panel moderator for an online discussion of the documentary "9 to 5" for Nebraska Educational Television
- Presented to two of Barbara Hewins-Maroney's Goodrich classes on Organized Labor as a Public Good
- Worked with the Montana IAFF to help with messaging that helped defeat Right to Work legislation in that state

Most Noteworthy of All?

John Kretzschmar, Director of the William Brennan Institute for Labor Studies, is retiring after serving UNO for over 41 years.

Congratulations, John! We are wishing you the very best as you head into retirement this year.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA FOUNDATION

[NUFUNDATION.ORG]

The Nebraska Ties that Bind

by Robyn Murray

Now that Greg Snyder is retired, he spends a lot of time at airports. As a volunteer with Travelers Aid, Greg, who is a Burnett Society member, staffs the information desk at Reagan Washington National to help people find their gates, hail a cab or even get patched up like one unlucky man who fell down an escalator.

"I can do something to help," Greg said in a recent interview from his D.C. home. "And I meet all kinds of interesting people."



If Greg is not at the airport, you might find him volunteering at a neighborhood library group or a COVID-19 testing site. He's a person who likes to keep busy and likes to give back.

"I can always try to have an impact," he said. "Volunteering at

the COVID site, it's like, I can't fix this, but I can do something."

In fact, Greg considers giving back — especially when it comes to Nebraska, his home state, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha, his alma mater — sort of a duty.

"I got a good-quality public school education in Nebraska, and taxpayers helped make that happen," he said. "I haven't been a taxpayer in Nebraska for a long time, so I need to start paying that back."

Raised in Omaha, an alumnus of Benson High School, Greg studied urban studies at UNO. It was an unusual major, which allowed him to plan his schedule and take some off-menu subjects.

Greg loved his time at UNO. He loved to learn and felt inspired by many of his professors. "College was the best time in my life," he said. "You have all the advantages of being an adult but hardly any of the responsibilities. I really loved it."

Greg received a small scholarship to attend UNO that he has never forgotten. It was about \$250 for the year, as he recalls, not enough to make a dent in tuition, but enough to cover his books. However, it wasn't the amount that was most meaningful.

Greg went on to study law at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and receive his juris doctor degree. From there, he practiced environmental law in Denver. Later, he began a career with the Environmental Protection Agency where he helped clean up toxic waste sites.

Greg feels UNO nurtured his love of learning and set him up for a successful career. In return, Greg made a bequest to support scholarships at the College of Public Affairs and Community Service, where he received his degree.

"I just like to have a tie to UNO," he said. "It was a very good time in my life. I wouldn't be where I am without that education."

If you are interested in learning more about opportunities to support the College of Public Affairs and Community Service, please contact Tessa Barney, Director of Development at tessa.barney@nufoundation.org or by phone at 402.502.4103.

CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH

[CPAR.UNOMAHA.EDU]

CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH
[CPAR.UNOMAHA.EDU]
Follow CPAR:  

QUICK LINKS TO DATA

MISSION

The Center for Public Affairs Research collaboratively produces and disseminates high-quality public scholarship about topics that impact the lives of Nebraskans.

VISION

C	P	A	R
COLLABORATIVE	PURPOSEFUL	ASPIRATIONAL	RESEARCH INTEGRITY
Fostering connections between faculty; scholars; students; and community, statewide, and national partners to produce transformative public scholarship.	Focusing on timely topics in order to provide inclusive and actionable solutions to improve the lives of Nebraskans.	Leading in the application of innovative and creative methods to conduct and communicate our research to further its impact in our community.	Conducting objective, high-quality research to create an evidence base for decision makers in Nebraska.

As the chair of the Legislative Planning Committee, I am so thankful for the important work done by the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Center for Public Affairs Research — its importance is no more obvious than in times like these. Each year, they provide a series of data-driven reports on numerous state issues that provide the committee insight into how our state is growing and adapting. During the interim, the legislative planning committee established four priority areas that will lead Nebraska towards rebuilding our "rainy day" fund and ensuring a fiscal safety net for Nebraskans during challenging times. Thank you to the UNO Center for Public Affairs Research for all of the work you do to help plan for future Nebraskans. Our work would not be possible without your efforts.

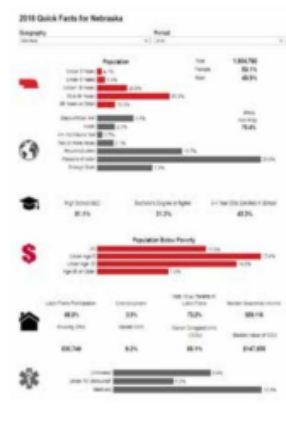
Senator Tony Vargas, District 7, Nebraska Legislature

CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH
[CPAR.UNOMAHA.EDU]
Follow CPAR:  

Nebraska Economic Recovery Dashboard



Nebraska Legislative Districts by the Numbers Dashboard



Comparing Nebraska Legislative Districts by the Numbers Dashboard



[cpar.unomaha.edu/policy]

Governing Website



[governing.unomaha.edu]

COVID-19 Impact on Nebraska Businesses Survey Reports



[cpar.unomaha.edu/nebraskabythenumbers]



COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

6

DEGREE
PROGRAMS
RANKED IN THE
TOP 30 IN THE
NATION

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

3,435
students

IN FALL 2020,
ENROLLMENT IN
CPACS HIT AN
ALL-TIME HIGH

1/4

UNO WAS 1 OF
4 UNIVERSITIES
TO RECEIVE
FUNDING FOR
THE NEXTGEN
SERVICE
PROGRAM

NATIONALLY RANKED.
LOCALLY ENGAGED.

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha



College of Public Affairs and Community Service
University of Nebraska at Omaha
6001 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68182
402.554.3989 | cpacs.unomaha.edu

Dean | John Bartle, Ph.D.
Associate Dean | Theresa Barron-McKeagney, Ph.D.

The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment. UNO is an AA/EEO/ADA institution. For questions, accommodations, or assistance please call/contact the Title IX/ADA/504 Coordinator (phone: 402.554.3490 or TTY 402.554.2978) or the Accessibility Services Center (phone: 402.554.2872).