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INSTITUTE FOR POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

VTIPG NEWSLETTER

Tidings Quarterly Reflection

Note to Readers: This is the 50th *Tidings* column in this quarterly series, which began more than a dozen years ago, in July 2008. As I reflect on this milestone, I want to thank all those who have encouraged me to write these essays across these years and to thank the many of you who have read and commented on them. Writing these columns continues to be a great personal and professional privilege. MOS

Public Colleges and Universities and the Nation's Governance Crisis

BY MAX STEPHENSON JR

Director, Institute for Policy and Governance

In principle and at their core, colleges and universities exist to pursue truth and to provide the fruits of that effort to the societies of which they are a part. As he worked to establish the University of Virginia, for example, Thomas Jefferson wrote the English historian William Roscoe:

[T]his institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. for here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it.^[1]

Jefferson's comments exhibited his Enlightenment-informed, life-long belief in the power of reason to guide a democratic people and to permit it to make choices that would ensure that population's probity, peace and freedom. He nonetheless worried that fear, selfishness and

the individual or mob tyranny often aligned with these human proclivities could impede the exercise of reason and quest for truth and undermine popular sovereignty and democracy.

For Jefferson, then, the great challenge democratic countries posed for universities' role within them was dialectical in character. Higher education institutions at once had the enormous responsibility to provide the necessary knowledge for self-governing citizens to advance their society and to understand their role as sovereigns within it and, at the same time, to ensure that those citizens so highly regarded universities as persistently to grant them sufficient legitimacy to address those challenges in a largely unfettered way. For Jefferson, that space was essential for the free exercise of reason, whose workings should and could serve as bulwarks against error.

I want to sketch briefly two interrelated major trends in American society that are now working to undermine the role Jefferson envisioned for public colleges and universities in the project of self-governance. Both trends have joined to undermine the legitimacy and social trust accorded higher education institutions and to narrow the space available to them to respond to the social strictures imposed on them.

Before embarking on that analysis, however, I should make clear that I believe that the Institute for Policy and Governance is no less vulnerable to these strategic trends than its parent institution, Virginia Tech. As the latter has been reshaped from without and within in past decades by these changes in its social and political environment, the same pressures have confronted the Institute. Indeed, no U.S. academic institution has been immune from these societal shifts in recent decades.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Dr. Lyusyena Kirakosyan, Senior Project Associate at VTIPG, published an article on the "[**Educational Legacy of the Rio 2016 Games: Lessons for Youth Engagement**](#)" in *Societies*, an international peer-reviewed, open access journal of sociology. Her article



ASPECT alumnus **Mario Khreiche** accepted a position at New York University and is now a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication at NYU. Mario received a Ph.D. in Political and Cultural Thought from the

has also been integrated into [the Olympic World Library](#) (OWL). The Olympic World Library is an initiative of The Olympic Studies Centre (OSC) and is simultaneously a library catalogue, an information portal and a search engine for Olympic knowledge.



VT PhD alumnus **Dr. Damion Blake** had a piece published in the *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research*. The article, entitled, "Researching Violence: Conducting Risky Fieldwork in Dangerous Spaces Across Latin America and the Caribbean," outlines fieldwork strategies that can make qualitative fieldwork research safer for researchers and participants. Damion finished in ASPECT in December 2012 and currently is serving as an Assistant Professor of Political Science and Policy Studies at Elon University. Professors **Max Stephenson, Jr.** and Karen Hult co-chaired his dissertation committee.

Alliance of Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought (ASPECT) at Virginia Tech and was a very active participant in the Institute's Community Change Collaborative.



Planning, Governance and Globalization PhD student **Danny White** successfully defended his dissertation in July entitled, "Sport and Social Capital: Perceptions of Sport for Development Organization Leaders in Kigali, Rwanda." Special thanks to Dr. John Dooley, CEO Virginia Tech Foundation, Jocelyn Widmer, Assistant Provost for Academic Innovation, Texas A and M University (formerly of Virginia Tech), David Kniola, Assistant Professor of Practice-Education for serving as members of Danny's advisory committee. VTIPG's **Max Stephenson Jr.** served as chair of that group. Dr. White is the **36th** individual closely associated with the Institute for Policy and Governance to complete their doctorate since IPG was founded on July 1, 2006.



Stephanie Lovely, a former member of the Community Change Collaborative, recently became a new alumna of the Agricultural, Leadership and Community Education PhD program in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Her dissertation, "[The Greenway Trail in Community Development: An examination of value, representation, and distribution of benefits among stakeholders.](#)" concerned sustainability and community perceptions of the Roanoke River Greenway, is publicly available through VT Works.



Professor **Max Stephenson, Jr.** was recently selected to serve as the Human Security, and Building Peace Program Director for the new [Jean Monnet Center of Excellence](#) at Virginia Tech. In this role he will be overseeing research on refugees and human rights for the Center. Research projects will address such concerns as Community Development and Peacebuilding, Managing Migration and Refugee Flows, Addressing Race, Ethnicity and Gender Discrimination, Reducing and Eradicating Poverty, Disasters and Humanitarian Crises and Sustainable Development.



Andy Morikawa, IPG Senior Fellow, has teamed up with the Global team in the Virginia Tech College of Engineering to create a new podcast series, [Engineers for the World](#). The podcast features stories of field applications of faculty research, teaching and service that stretch beyond the university and across borders. It is a collaboration between



Lia Kelinsky-Jones successfully passed her doctoral preliminary examination on August 27th. Many thanks to Lia's committee members for their support and intellectual guidance: **Professor Max Stephenson Jr.** (Institute for Policy and Governance), Dr. Laura Zanotti (Political Science), Dr. Tom Archibald (ALCE) and her chair Dr. Kim L. Niewolny (Department

the [Academy for Global Engineering](#), the [Institute for Policy and Governance](#), and the [Charles E. Via, Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering](#).



Third year ASPECT student **Molly Todd** published a review of Daniel Nemser's (2017) book, *Infrastructures of Race: Concentration and Biopolitics in Colonial Mexico*. This review considers Nemser's thoughtful exploration of colonialism's legacies, and the ways in which material structures and bodies in space worked to create what he calls "operative categories of race." **Dr. Max Stephenson, Jr.** and Dr. Laura Zanotti serve as co-chairs of Molly's doctoral advisory committee.



Congratulations to Planning, Governance and Globalization PhD student **Rachel Gabriele** on successful oral defense of her preliminary examination! Her faculty advisory

of Agricultural, Leadership, & Community Education).



VTIPG Associate Director **Mary Beth Dunkenberger** is now serving as a co-investigator on a recently awarded \$2.6 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (Institute on Drug Abuse). The funds will be used to develop studies on how to best provide peer support services for individuals being treated for opioid use disorder.

[Click here to read more...](#)



ASPECT PhD candidate and current President of the Institute's Community Change Collaborative, **Nada Berrada**, recently learned she had been awarded the American Institute for Maghreb

committee is comprised of co-chairs, Maggie Cowell, Urban Affairs and Planning and **Max Stephenson Jr.**, SPIA-VTIPG, Sharóne Tomer, Architecture and Andrew Newman, Anthropology, Wayne State University.

Studies Jeanne Jeffers Mrad Award to participate in the Middle East Studies Association conference in October of 2020. Congratulations to Nada, whose doctoral advisory committee is chaired by VTIPG Director **Max Stephenson Jr.**

The Community Change journal published their third volume, "Environmental and Climate Change." Community Change is an online, peer-reviewed, graduate student-run journal at Virginia Tech that examines the practices, processes, and individual and collective struggles that produce change at all levels of society. In this third issue, the contributors explore questions, setbacks, and possibilities for hope in addressing one of the preeminent global challenges of the 21st century: anthropogenic climate change, a human-caused phenomenon described in scholarly publications and studied by experts in the field.

[Click here to view journal...](#)

PROJECT UPDATES

VTIPG's Federal Reimbursement Unit (FRU) has ongoing responsibilities to support youth being served by Fairfax County's Foster Care and Adoptions program and the Fairfax/Falls Church Children's Services Act (CSA). Fewer county tax dollars are spent to support children who are in receipt of services through these two programs because of the team's vigorous efforts to obtain all pertinent available federal, state and parental resources to assist them. The team continues to be very productive, yielding positive fiscal and program outcomes for Fairfax County. During FY 2020, the team had a fiscal impact on the two county programs the team supports in the amount of \$1,125,609.

Despite very tough economic times and the COVID-19 pandemic, the County renewed the university's contract without changes. The FRU team seamlessly transitioned to working remotely in mid-March and will continue to do so for the immediate future, following the lead of the County's program's they support.

The PACE to Recovery

The PACE to Recovery initiative of Piedmont Community Services, in partnership with Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital, Sovah Health – Martinsville and funded by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services (DBHDS), will soon officially launch in the West Piedmont health district. A technical assistance team led by VTIPG (Mary Beth Dunkenberger, PI) has supported this initiative since Fall 2019.

[Read more about this project...](#)

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Project

A research team from VTIPG and VT's Center for Public Health Practice and Research (College of Veterinary Medicine) has continued to provide ongoing data management and outcomes and process evaluation services for the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) project for New River Valley Health Services (NRVCS) this fall. The CCBHC project targets adults with serious mental illness, serious substance abuse disorders or co-occurring disorders and children with serious emotional disturbance. Specifically, the project seeks to expand capacity and provide more comprehensive care to the population of NRVCS adults and youth who are medically under-or-uninsured.

[Read more about the CCBHC project here...](#)

Evaluation of New River Valley Drug Court

VTIPG is working with the VT Office of Economic Development on an Evaluation of the New River Valley Drug Court. The Principal Investigator of this project is Sarah Lyon-Hill, Economic Development Specialist in the Office of Economic Development. This research is investigating the impact of the drug court from an individual, family and community perspective. The team is using a mixed methods study design employing qualitative and quantitative methods. They are also evaluating the Court's fiscal impact at the locality level. The research team will present its results in October.

Medication Assisted Treatment Messaging for Detention Center and Drug Court

This analysis, which is led by Professor Nneka Logan in the VT School of Communication, is examining the use of medicated assisted treatment in the detention and drug court setting. The area of focus is the Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare service area, which includes the cities of Roanoke and Salem and Botetourt, Craig and Roanoke counties. The study's purpose is to create evidence-based outreach and training materials for professional stakeholders involved in detention settings and drug courts employing medication assisted treatment. VTIPG researchers have conducted an extensive literature review as well as individual interviews with members of the medical, behavioral health and criminal justice and law enforcement communities. The research team will present its results later this fall.

Connection to Care (C2C) Project

VTIPG has been awarded an extension for its Connection to Care (C2C) project, which had been slated to end in November. Because of COVID-19 and the community-based character of his research, the project's sponsor has extended its timeline through August of 2021. Face-to-face research has been restrained during the COVID-19 pandemic, but will continue at a future date. VTIPG faculty and students are partnering with several Roanoke area agencies to provide REVIVE! training through several drive thru events in the Roanoke area. REVIVE! Is the Opioid Overdose and Naloxone Education program for the Commonwealth of Virginia. REVIVE! provides training on how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose emergency using naloxone.

Be Prepared – Save Lives!



**Connection to Care(C2C)* partners
are offering Drive Thru/Walk Thru
REVIVE! Training,
FREE NARCAN (and More)**

for information email or call the Hope Initiative at
rvhopeinitiative16@gmail.com or 540-309-9495

When	Where
Wednesday, Oct. 7; 5:00 – 7:00 PM	Bradley Free Clinic/ Hope Initiative 1240 3 rd Street, SW, Roanoke
Wednesday, Oct. 21; 1:00 – 3:00 PM	Council of Community Services, 2720 Liberty Rd, NW Roanoke
Thursday, Oct. 29; 3:00 – 5:00 PM	Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare, Burrell Center, 611 McDowell Ave, Roanoke

***C2C is an Office of National Drug Control Policy: Combating Opioid
Overdose Through Community-level Intervention
grant funded program with the goal of reducing overdoses and
connecting individuals to harm reduction and treatment services.**

RESTORE Project

David Moore, VTIPG Senior Research Associate, continues to serve on contract as the Project Director for Total Action for Progress (TAP) SwiftStart program under a longstanding partnership between VTIPG and TAP. In a related initiative, in October of last year, TAP announced a new program called RESTORE (Re-employment, Support and Training for the

Opioid-Related Epidemic) Southwest Virginia. TAP is one of only five agencies in the United States to be granted funds for this program for women impacted by the opioid crisis. RESTORE assists families affected by the opioid epidemic by providing career services and job training to women in recovery and those otherwise personally affected by the crisis. TAP recently announced that Charysse Hairston will serve as the Project Manager for the RESTORE program.

COMMUNITY CHANGE COLLABORATIVE

In September 2020, Community Change Collaborative (CCC) members welcomed [Lily Yeh](#), an internationally celebrated artist and award-winning founder and former executive and artistic director of the Village of Arts and Humanities. Lily Yeh developed a unique methodology for using the arts as a tool for community building and personal transformation during her tenure at [The Village](#). Founding Barefoot Artists in 2002, Lily Yeh has since worked [internationally](#) in efforts employing the arts to spur community change in Rwanda, Kenya, Ghana, Ecuador and China, among other nations. Barefoot Artists aims to train and empower local residents, organize communities, and take action for a more compassionate, just and sustainable future. Yeh's work in northern Rwanda with a community as it worked to address the long-term effects of that nation's genocide has been famously and sensitively treated by the multi-award winning author Terry Tempest Williams in her searing, *Finding Beauty in a Broken World* (New York: Vintage Publishers, 2009).



[Watch the presentation with Lily Yeh here](#), or [on YouTube](#).

COMMENTARIES & ESSAYS

SOUNDINGS

A commentary series authored by VTIPG Director Max Stephenson

September 28: [Rhetoric, Justice and the Pursuit of Power](#)

September 14: [‘The Enemy Within’](#)

August 31: [Mobilization Politics, Democracy and the Human Quest for Order](#)

August 17: [Charting a Path from ‘Quasi-Democratic Autocracy’ to Democratic Self-](#)

Governance

August 3: **On Rhetoric, Posturing and the Politics of Hate**

July 20: **On Rhetoric, Leadership and Democratic Community**

July 6: **Contentions that Pass For Conversation**

RE: REFLECTIONS & EXPLORATIONS

Online essay series hosted by VTIPG and edited by Professor Max Stephenson Jr., written by graduate students across the University to reflect on their ongoing work in governance and policy related concerns.

September 17: **A Reflection from Nepal: A Path to Engage Returning Migrants in Agriculture?**

September 10: **U.S. Policy at Cross-Purposes: The State of the Nation's STEM Agenda**

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



For the past several years, VTIPG has been partnering closely on several research projects with the Center for Public Health Practice and Research (CPHPR). CPHPR is housed in the Department of Population Health Sciences, in the College of Veterinary Medicine and is supported by the **Institute for Society, Culture and Environment** at Virginia Tech. CPHPR's mission is to foster interdisciplinary, collaborative public health practice and research activities at Virginia Tech and among external public health agencies, organizations,

practitioners and researchers. CPHPR's research portfolio can be found here: www.cphpr.publichealth.vt.edu. As part of this enduring partnership between CPHPR and VTIPG, we here highlight Dr. Kathy Hosig, CPHPR Director, and Dr. Sophie Wenzel, CPHPR Associate Director.

[Read more about Drs. Hosig and Wenzel](#)

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Marcel Pambo is a first-year Planning, Governance and Globalization Ph.D. student at Virginia Tech working with Professor **Max Stephenson, Jr.** Before entering the PGG program, Marcel completed a Master's in Senegal from Le Centre des Hautes Etudes de Défense et de Sécurité (CHEDS; The Center for Advanced Studies of Defense and Security, a unit of Université Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar), where he conducted his thesis on the topic of "Lessons Learned from Peacekeeping Operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, and Mali: The UN Facing States' Sovereignty."

Marcel believes that the dependence on external assistance for security is a major challenge to the autonomy of any country and that the principles of Good Security Sector Governance (SGG) offer substantial possibilities to address this concern. His research interests include West Africa's Regional Security Organizations, Security Sector Governance, financial dependence and accountability issues. He is particularly interested in the impact of external assistance on regional security structures in West Africa.

[Read more about Marcel](#)

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