

School of Public and International Affairs Director's Summary 2008-2009

From School of Public and International Affairs Director Gerry Kearns, Ph.D.

Discovery

The standing of our faculty was well acknowledged by the university; three faculty members were promoted to the position of full professor: **Wilma Dunaway**, **Anne Khademian**, and **Robert Lang**. Three of our faculty received service awards: **Jesse Richardson** for 10 years' service, **John Browder** for 20, and **Larkin Dudley** for the impressive loyalty of 30 years' service. This year the School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA) faculty published 9 books, 26 book chapters, and 59 refereed journal articles. In addition, there are 4 books, 33 book chapters, and 31 articles currently in press. Faculty gave 93 conference papers, edited 6 journals, and served on 33 editorial boards. Their work was supported by 34 grants and a further 11 applications are under consideration.



Wilma Dunaway



Anne Khademian



Robert Lang



Jesse Richardson



John Browder



Larkin Dudley

The research of SPIA faculty is recognized internationally. **Wilma Dunaway** published her monograph, *Women, Work and Family in the Antebellum Mountain South*, with Cambridge University Press. **Paul Knox** published *Metrourbia* (Rutgers University Press) and this thoughtful reflection upon the future of our cities gained radio and press coverage, as did the book he published with **Heike Mayer**, *Small Town Sustainability* (Birkhäuser Verlag, Basel, Switzerland). **Robert Lang's** *New Politics of Planning* (Urban Land Institute) garnered much attention for its review of how land use controls have been used both well and ill in attempts to regulate urban growth over the past generation or so. **Sonia Hirt** prepared a report on the planning dilemmas of the post-socialist Eastern European cities for UN-Habitat and this was so impressive that the UN will soon publish her report as a separate monograph.



Paul Knox



Heike Mayer



Sonia Hirt

Two of our new faculty received high honors. **Ralph Buehler's** dissertation, *Transport Policies, Travel Behavior, and Sustainability: A Comparison of Germany and the United States*, was awarded the Barclay Gibbs Jones Award for Best Dissertation in Planning 2008 from the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning. **Matthew Dull's** dissertation, *The Politics of Results: Comprehensive Reform and Institutional Choice*, was recognized this year with the 2008 Leonard D. White Award for the best doctoral dissertation in the field of public administration by the American Political Science Association. **Patrick Roberts** and **Yang Zhang** were selected by the National Science Foundation (NSF) for the prestigious Enabling the Next Generation of Hazards and Disasters Researchers program. The Eno Transportation Foundation invited **Ralph Buehler** to join their Leadership Development Conference as one of the most promising members of the next generation of transportation scholars. **Gerard Toal** got a significant NSF grant for his research on quasi-states and published no fewer than seven refereed articles on aspects of international relations. Toal gave the keynote address to an international conference organized to discuss critical geopolitics, 20 years after he had himself coined the term.



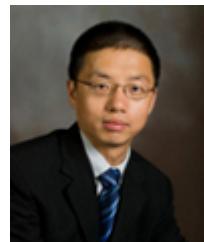
Ralph Buehler



Matthew Dull



Patrick Roberts



Yang Zhang



Gerard Toal

John Randolph's book *Energy for Sustainability* was both topical and well received. It is topicality shown by the numerous invitations that take him around the country and its reception is shown by it being short-listed for the PROSE publishers award as the best engineering and technical book of 2008. **Ralph Buehler's** work on sustainable transportation policies produced a high-profile report for the Brookings Institution and six other refereed articles. On a related subject, **Kris Wernstedt** continued to get grants for his research on brownfield sites and organized a session for a conference dedicated to the subject.



John Randolph



Kris Wernstedt

Karen Till was involved as part of the editorial board of a new journal, *Memory Studies*, publishing there an overview of the relationship between artistic and planning practices in the field of heritage and memory. She was also honored as the Gillmor Visiting Professor in Architecture, University of Calgary. **Tim Luke** continues his productive and high-profile involvement with national debate over public culture, art and current politics, presenting eight conference papers and honored with three invitations to give keynote addresses. He is also on the editorial boards of no fewer than 15 academic journals.



Karen Till



Tim Luke

Some of our graduate students organized and published a new online journal, *Public Knowledge*. **Giselle Datz** organized a panel on the global credit crisis for the annual meeting of the International Studies Association while **Wilma Dunaway** organized a session for the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society. **Joyce Rothschild** and **Max Stephenson** edited two special issues of the sociological journal, *The American Behavioral Scientist*. This year, Stephenson organized a meeting on cross-sector partnerships and disaster relief and mitigation in August and September in Davos, Switzerland; this will produce a further special issue of a leading journal. **Heike Mayer** edited a special issue of the journal *Economic Development Quarterly*.



Joyce Rothschild



Max Stephenson

Learning



Diane Zahm

Two of our programs were evaluated this year. The masters in public administration was subject to an accreditation visit from the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. The masters in urban and regional planning was evaluated by the Planning Accreditation Board. Both of these visits involved many faculty in a lot of work preparing documents and responding to requests for information. I think both site teams were impressed with our professionalism and commitment to vocational training. For work produced in one of her studio classes, **Diane Zahm** was honored by the Small Town and Rural Planning Division of the American Planning Association with the 2009 James A. Segedy Award for an Outstanding Student Project. The university also recognized the quality of the teaching in the school, awarding certificates of teaching excellence to **Anne Khademian** and **Sonia Hirt**.



Sang Choi

This year the Center for Public Administration and Policy (CPAP) established a new graduate certificate program in local government management. The first cohort of local government employees seeking the certificate entered the program in fall 2008 under the aegis of a contract between the Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA) and the Office of Outreach and Professional Education, bringing in much-needed external resources, including a graduate assistantship. This partnership with the VLGMA has fostered the development of relationships between CPAP and a wide range of public officials across Virginia. CPAP also established a new graduate certificate in homeland security, drawing on faculty in CPAP and Government and International Affairs (GIA). On the initiative of **Sang Choi**, CPAP initiated a new exchange program relationship with Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU) in Korea, which has already hosted a 10-week visit to Blacksburg by five students and one faculty member from SKKU. **Max Stephenson** has been central to the development of a global

dialogue for responsibility, which will bring six students from Virginia Tech to meet with six students from the University of San Diego at the Kroc Center in San Diego.



Casey Dawkins

Tim Luke has been centrally involved in many Virginia Tech initiatives in the field of distance and distributed learning, managing the Center for Digital Discourse and Culture and helping organize the Creative Collaboratory for Technology and Design. **Yang Zhang** took the lead in establishing a new Geographic Information System (GIS) Laboratory for students and faculty. **John Browder** has been exploring ways to extend our study abroad programs to include Costa Rica. **Casey Dawkins** represented Virginia Tech in the Eurasian Research Symposium, which linked the schools of the Atlantic Coast Conference and the KOC University in Istanbul with a view to promoting an international research partnership.

Engagement

All faculty continued to engage with the legacy of the horrific events of April 16, 2007. **Tim Luke** was instrumental in creating an April 16 Archive and this had great visibility on the Internet, spawning several dozen reports in national newspapers and television. This project also produced a reflective and intelligent collection of essays, *There Is a Gunman on Campus: Tragedy and Terror at Virginia Tech* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2008). Faculty involvement with the community of Virginia Tech also included the work of **John Randolph** on the Virginia Tech Climate Action Commitment and Sustainability Plan. Randolph convened 15 meetings, coordinated contributions from some 50 individuals, and largely wrote the final 150-page report. **John Browder** continues to be involved with the annual Trees for Life Program at Heritage Park and Natural Area.



Brian Cook

The general election this year saw many faculty contribute significantly to the university's mission of engagement with the wider society. **Brian Cook** was decision desk

consultant at ABC News, assisting the news team to predict the overall results of the presidential election as early returns were reported. **Robert Lang** and **Casey Dawkins** were advisors for the election coverage of *USA Today*. They were prominent in the way that the suburban vote was analyzed during this election. Lang also gave a series of lectures in Paris as part of his Fulbright Fellowship. His civic engagement, included leading discussions of the Brookings-sponsored report on the so-called "mountain megas" (of which he was co-author last year). He also spoke to forums, including those for the governors of Arizona, Colorado, and Utah, and the senate majority leader.

Faculty continued to publish reflections upon public affairs in popular venues. For example, **Matthew Dull** and **Patrick Roberts** placed in *The Hill*, a high-profile Washington blog, a piece about presidential appointments. They have also created a blog that monitors the appointment practices of the new Obama administration. **Max Stephenson** was a member of two policy advisory committees to then-Senator Obama (urban policy and civic engagement policy). **Anne Khademian's** talk on "Hurricane Katrina and the Failure of Homeland Security" was broadcast by C-Span, while her forum on the financial regulatory crisis was hosted by the National Academy of Public Administration in Washington, D.C. The International Olympic



Joel Peters

Committee invited **Max Stephenson** to present at the first International Forum on Peace-Building, Sport, and Development of Lausanne, Switzerland. **Joel Peters** co-directs a research project at the Middle East program, Chatham House, London, on "International Intervention and Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process," and his scholarship on the Middle East peace process is called upon in many contexts, including the BBC's coverage of Israel's attacks upon Gaza in December 2008. **Ralph Buehler's** report on what the United States can learn from German sustainable transportation policies was launched at a reception hosted jointly by the German Embassy in Washington and the Brookings Institution. Buehler also engaged with **Paul Krugman** on sustainability in the letters pages of the *New York Times*, and his views are cited in both U.S. and German newspapers.

Faculty continue to work with community groups. **Wilma Dunaway** organized and led a training workshop for local public school teachers on the racial and gender stereotypes about Appalachia, and worked as advisor to the Underground Railway Museum in Cincinnati, Ohio, and to the Cherokee Museum, Talequah, Okla. She also maintains three public websites on Appalachian slavery, 19th-century Appalachian women, and one on diversity resources for public school teachers. **Casey Dawkins** has served on the Task Force of the Governor of Virginia on Foreclosure Prevention. **Larkin Dudley**

facilitated community forums with New River Valley citizens on three alternative ways to reduce health care costs. **Karen Till** facilitated student projects with planners and the Farmers' Market in Blacksburg. As part of a visiting position at the University of Calgary, Till was involved in facilitating conversations between architects and groups of homeless women around the design of a new shelter for homeless people. Max Stephenson serves as a member of the board of directors of the Virginia Network of Nonprofit Organizations, and also as a member of the national advisory committee on financial accountability and transparency of the board of management of the high-profile organization Independent Sector. **Jesse Richardson** gave 25 talks to community groups on various planning issues and was honored by the college with an award for his contributions to the outreach mission of the university.

Several faculty engaged their students in research in the City of Roanoke. **Karen Till** worked with planners, community workers, and librarians in Roanoke on issues relating to memory and urban design. This work was reported on in local newspapers. As part of the visit of Mindy Fullilove, Till organized a community forum in the Gainsboro neighborhood of Roanoke. In collaboration with city planners, **Yang Zhang** worked with his GIS class on the Roanoke's policy on brownfield sites, which was mentioned in *Roanoke Times*, NewsLeader.com, and Virginia Tech News.



Karen Danielson

Faculty are also involved with various professional and academic bodies. **Karen Danielssen** is taking the lead as local organizer for the annual meeting of the American Collegiate Schools of Planning to be held this fall in Washington, D.C., on the 50th anniversary of the institution. **Jesse Richardson** is on the organizing committees for two academic meetings, the North Carolina Water Law and Policy Conference and the annual meeting of the American Agricultural Law Association. **Larkin Dudley** chairs the section on public administration education for the American Society for Public Administration. **Anne Khademian** chairs the doctoral committee of the National Association of Schools of Public Administration and Affairs. **Tim Luke** is on the editorial boards of no fewer than 15 academic journals and was heavily involved in the successful competition to bring the public culture journal, *The Minnesota Review*, to Virginia Tech. **Joyce Rothschild** is the president of the community and grassroots action and participation section of the Association for Research on Non-profit Organizations and Voluntary Associations and organized two sessions for the association's annual meeting. **John Browder** served on the doctoral dissertation fellowship academic review committee for the Inter-American Foundation. **Heike Mayer** acted as chair of the student paper competition of the economic development division of the American Planning Association. **Paul Knox** is a member of the higher education leadership award

committee of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, and of the awards committee of the Association of American Geographers. **Sonia Hirt** was a member of the jury that selected the Southeast European Fellowships awarded by the American Councils for International Education.

Diversity

SPIA shares the university's concern that we pursue inclusive excellence, addressing the multicultural diversity and systemic inequities of the community within and beyond the campus. Three of our public events addressed this explicitly. We raised the issue of voter registration and perceived attempts to marginalize students by the diffusion of unfounded concerns about the risks they ran if they registered to vote in Blacksburg. We brought to Blacksburg the leading scholar of the racial dimensions of environmental justice, Robert Bullard, and leading scholar and activist on issues of racial justice and urban planning, Mindy Fullilove. In addition, one of our graduate students, **Leah Wickham**, organized a high-profile event on the crime of sex trafficking in women. All of these events were covered by the student newspaper.