



## The case for leadership training in public service

Public service is in the spotlight on the national stage in its volunteer format. Led by President Obama's "call to action" in his inaugural address, legislation and federal initiatives have come along to strengthen national service laws and increase civic engagement throughout the country. These efforts aim at national problems such as the fallout from a failing economy and a weak health-care system. As federal and local governments seek people for a massive volunteer force, a significant, if not vital, element appears overshadowed: sustaining and strengthening an effective public service sector for current and future generations.

It is no surprise to those 11 million people working in the nonprofit sector, or those countless people who are linked to public-service entities, that there is a major focus on this sector. Nonprofit and public agencies are vital to the nation's social and economic well-being. They represent the arts, economic development and social services to name a few. The public service sector has been the catalyst for social change, serving as the incubator for programs and policies that have worldwide impact.

Now, as the country has an administration focused on "change" to deal with our most

pressing problems, citizens are being sought for community service, primarily as volunteers. Two pieces of legislation were recently signed to this end: the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act and the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. These laws are steps in the right direction and will help restore our nation's health. People of all ages are being encouraged to participate, with financial incentives for students and seniors. Service opportunities for working professionals and better collaboration between all sectors will also be needed.

We need to prioritize and recognize these nonprofit and public sectors as vital. The leaders of the public service sector maintain its strength, yet they continue to lack recognition, compensation and resources. While the magnitude and contributions of the sector are unmatched, it has always been under-valued and under-funded.

Planning beyond the immediate crisis must begin. While a spike in job and volunteer applications is seen by organizations such as Teach for America and CityYear, will these novices remain in the sector? Will those who are turning to public service because of a weak private job market leave once the private sector revives?

Rose Anello was involved with the PSSP for many years as a scholar placement supervisor in her former position as associate executive director for public affairs at the Citizens' Committee for Children of New York. She said: "When the economy improves, that citizenry in public service will hopefully be embedded in our society but there is a concern that group will dwindle." Anello continued: "While one does not replace the other, there is an urgent need for public service professionals who can chart the course, write the blueprint and directions for the citizenry to augment. Volunteers need drivers."

Miriam Burns, formerly senior policy analyst with the New York City Council and now a consultant, has been involved with the PSSP for 10 years as an adjunct professor, scholar supervisor and mentor. She believes that while volunteers are essential to many agencies, "professionals bring a different skill." "They understand the issues because they often must implement public policy decisions," she said. "Both roles are important but a highly educated, aware and involved cadre of professionals is essential."

*Continued on page five*

### THIS JUST IN!

As we went to press, *News & Views* learned that Jenny Alcaide (far right) has won one of 16 national fellowships given by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. No one should be surprised to learn that Alcaide's mentor this year, Yessica Diaz (right), honored as outstanding mentor, in '97 was herself a winner of this coveted fellowship. A third public service scholar has also won this award — Eleanor Velasquez, '02, establishing a remarkable record for a small program. In August, Alcaide will go to Washington to start nine months of public policy work at the national level. She will receive a monthly stipend and may work in a Congressional office, national agency or advocacy group.



A view from the

# DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

by Elaine M. Walsh, Ph.D.



**I**n 1993, I said in this newsletter: "People sometimes forget that you need leadership to make change; you don't have the leadership, you're not going to get the change." While every academic year brings new challenges, such themes persist: the government's inattention to leadership development, the under-representation of women and minorities in leadership, and our constant struggle to finance our program. Yet our scholars act as a beacon of light in troubled times and always represent change. This is why our program continues: to prepare students for their leadership as agents of social change and to fill the significant gap in education that trains professionals for public service.

In our feature article, we hope to raise awareness about the need for leadership development in public service. Recent national attention on the public sector promotes volunteerism while giving minimal attention to training leaders in the field. There is no question that volunteers serve a critical role in public service. But as Rose Anello said in the article, "Volunteers need drivers," and the public sector cannot thrive

without a pipeline for leaders. I am proud to be a part of a model program that is a true pipeline for leaders. This year, 24 talented people completed the undergraduate cycle and I am confident of their abilities to persevere in public service and make a lasting impact.

On page four, we have highlighted three alumni who are committed to growing in public service. They are professionals working in government and nonprofit agencies, following their passions and building on skills and knowledge gained in the program. They are yet another example of the effectiveness and need for this type of program in our country.

I am also happy to showcase two of our long-time internship agency partners on page three: The New York Industrial Retention Network and the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development. As influential agencies in our city, they provide invaluable support for the program and the professional development of the scholars. Each year, scholars compete for their placements and are never dissatisfied with their experience.

Thank you, thank you all once again for supporting us. Your continued and increased support is needed now more than ever. We have been experiencing greater fundraising challenges this past year. Agencies that have given in prior years are forced to decrease or even stop donations because of their own financial struggles. Corporate foundations that have generously matched individual donations, such as The New York Times Foundation, are either scaling back or closing these programs. As we look forward to continuing our pilot program at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and admit more scholars to the program, we ask for your renewed commitment. We need your help in these uncertain times.

## ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

Public service agencies and offices interested in becoming a Public Service Scholar Host can now submit applications through the program's website:  
<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/pssp/>

## DEDICATED TO OUR MISSION

The Public Service Scholar Program, a leadership program, seeks to improve our cities and the lives of people by preparing talented undergraduates for careers in the public and nonprofit sectors. Housed in the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning at Hunter College, the 18-credit, full academic year program gives these students, especially women and minority-group members, an opportunity to explore public service through internships in government agencies, legislative offices and nonprofit organizations. Scholars participate in academic seminars on city government and public policy. The PSSP receives external funds to support the program, including funding for stipends for our scholars. Without this help, our students could not participate. Major funding for the PSSP is provided through the generosity of the Ann S. Kheel Charitable Fund, Helena Rubinstein Foundation, the Estate of Dorothy Epstein, and the United Way of New York City, along with generous support from New York Assembly Members Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Micah Z. Kellner, Deborah Glick, Richard N. Gottfried, and Brian P. Kavanagh, New York State Senator Liz Krueger, and New York City Council Member Daniel R. Garodnick.



## The New York Industrial Retention Network

*The New York Industrial Retention Network is a nonprofit economic-development organization established in 1997 to strengthen New York City's manufacturing sector and promote sustainable development. (www.NYIRN.org)*

This organization has demonstrated a decade of commitment to the Public Service Scholar Program and to the professional development of its participants. A strong supporter, advocate and alumnus of the program, Anne M. Seifried, is deputy director at the organization. She has been welcoming the talents and dedication of scholars as a way to bolster the mission of her nonprofit. As a supervisor of scholars since 1999, Seifried recently discussed this involvement.

"PSSP scholars have allowed the network to tackle projects that we would otherwise have been unable to do with our limited resources," she said. NYIRN's confidence in the abilities of the scholars is made clear by their challenging work assignments. One project involved researching land-use variances for a major report; another was designing and building a media database to track press coverage of the organization and its clients. Still another effort created case studies of clients for use in grant proposals and website success stories. Seifried said of the scholars: "They have contributed enormously to our organization over the years, with lasting impact." While this network has accepted student interns from other programs and organizations, Seifried said that they found others do not provide "as much support for the students and supervisors," nor do they continue for as long. "Scholars are consistently more mature and better prepared to jump in and take on critical assignments for our organization," she said.



*Scholar Lenore Costello, left, with Anne M. Seifried, scholar placement supervisor and deputy director at NYIRN*

NYIRN believes in the PSSP model and its internal support system, which enables both supervisors and scholars to address problems. "We cannot state this strongly enough," Seifried said. "Experience has taught us that Public Service Scholars are the only undergraduates we can accept as interns."

One scholar this year, Lenore Costello, chose this organization for her internship because of its singular approach to two of the city's biggest concerns: jobs and the environment. Costello said: "NYIRN addresses both of these issues in advocating and supporting green manufacturing within the city. I love working with people who

are so passionate about what they do, on something that is so important for our fellow New Yorkers." Her experience is like those of earlier scholars, who have all expressed appreciation for a supportive working environment, and the chance to work on tasks that increased their knowledge of green manufacturing and business practices here.

When asked about the value of the scholar program to NYIRN and other parts of the public service community, Seifried said: "By hosting a scholar, we are investing in the future of our city. Because the placements are competitive and the program provides supervisors with ongoing communication and encouragement, we are motivated to 'go the extra mile' with these interns and spend time, not just supervising, but advising our scholars around issues of professional development: time management, professional behavior and communications, business ethics, etc. The combination of real-world work experience with the weekly supervisor-scholar meetings, contextualizing coursework and mentoring program, teach them so much more than a part-time job ever could. We would not be able to provide the challenging work experience that we do without the other pieces of the program."

## New York City Department of Youth and Community Development

*The Department of Youth and Community Development was created in 1996 to provide the city with high-quality youth and family programming. Its central task is administering available city, state, and federal funds to effective community-based organizations. The department and its partners are translating big ideas into practical solutions. Every individual program plays a critical role in its larger plan to empower New Yorkers and enhance their communities. (www.nyc.gov/dydc)*

This department is one of the most influential government agencies in New York City, doing work that affects countless disadvantaged youths and families through an array of projects that include literacy programs, job development, employment opportunities, after-school services and homeless outreach. For over six years, this agency has attracted scholars seeking internships and it continues to be a powerful building block in their professional development.

For the last four years, the coordinator of youth initiatives and runaway and homeless youth services, Robyn Causey, has supervised scholars. Causey has ensured that scholars understand the workings of the department and its purpose and role in the city's direct youth and family programs. She assigns challenging work and provides exposure to city leaders and government hearings. Scholars have gained understanding and professional experience

*Continued on page five*

# ALUMNI IN ACTION

Making an impact in public service



## Chloe Pullman '03

Chloe Pullman entered the program uncertain about her career path. She graduated inspired with enthusiasm to enter public service. Pullman is now a lawyer with the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

As a scholar, Pullman was inspired by Ruth W. Messinger, former Manhattan Borough President, who led the spring semester seminar. Pullman said she "admired Ruth's intellect and level of ethics that she maintained throughout her long career in politics and public service." She credited Messinger with making her want to work for a government agency. After graduation, Pullman took a full-time position at the agency where she had her internship placement, Neighborhood Family Services Coalition. For two years, she worked on the Youth for Summer Jobs Campaign. Then she was awarded a National Merit Scholarship and entered Indiana University Law School.



*PSSP alumnus  
Chloe Pullman*

Pullman has been a lawyer with the Corps of Engineers since last year and feels her position is a "positive way to practice law." She offers guidance on legal issues in areas such as the environment, real estate, labor, and employment. She enjoys being exposed to community members and influential leaders, and enjoys the professional opportunity to make a difference. She believes in the relevance of the scholar program and said that "a significant lack of leadership" in the sector indicates that "more incentives are needed to enter and grow in public service."

## Caitlin Dunklee '05

Prison justice has always been of great interest to Caitlin Dunklee, and her experience in the program strengthened her desire to pursue a career in this area. "The PSSP allowed me to transform my interests and volunteer experience in prison justice into a meaningful career," Dunklee said. Right now she is working for the Correctional Association of New York, an independent nonprofit group with legislative authority to look into prison conditions.



*PSSP alumnus Caitlin Dunklee,  
middle, on Democracy Now!*

Dunklee got experience interning in State Senator Liz Krueger's office. Though a connection made at her internship, she got a volunteer position for three years with the Coalition for Women Prisoners, which afforded insight and knowledge in this field. "After graduating and beginning my job search," Dunklee said,

"I found that I had a substantial advantage over my peers with degrees from small private liberal arts colleges, and that was because of the network, reputation, and know-how developed through the PSSP."

Dunklee is a public policy associate at the Correctional Association. She is leading the organization's campaign to repeal the harsh Rockefeller drug laws of 1973 and coordinates what is now called the Drop the Rock campaign. The Rockefeller Drug Laws mandate the same penalty for drug possession as for second-degree murder. Through public education, community organizing and legislative advocacy, she presses for more effective and humane drug policies. "I have a great job!" Dunklee says. "I not only work to change current policies, but, through leadership development, movement building, and education, I work to change how policies are made."

## Jennifer Krinsky '08

"My career path has been entirely a product of, not merely influenced by, my experience in the PSSP," Jennifer Krinsky said. She completed her internship as a scholar in the office of State Senator Liz Krueger. After graduation, she accepted a full-time position there as community liaison. "The opportunity for this job," she said, "was based on my contacts with people in the office and the ability I was given to show my skills and worth to Senator Krueger's team; an opportunity I would not have been given in any capacity without the program."



*PSSP alumnus  
Jennifer Krinsky*

Krinsky said of her job, "Every day in the office is a different animal." She is excited to work on transportation issues because "the proposed MTA fare increases and service cuts are on everyone's mind." "Furthermore," Krinsky said, "the Second Avenue subway project has been incredibly interesting to work on since I've lived on the east side of Manhattan for my entire life." She also enjoys her work on the Youth Civics Project, a "Democracy 101" project at the state level that teaches high school students about state government. She will be the lead facilitator for this project next year.

When asked to recall an inspiring moment in the program, Krinsky said: "The entire program was compelling and invigorating. It allowed me to see myself in a way I'd never seen before and become immersed in a professional environment." She remains a strong advocate and believes the program is especially important in today's political and economic environment. "I could not think of a more interesting and exciting time during which to be working in the public sector," she said.

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## Case for Leadership Training

*Continued from front cover*

Dr. Kathryn Conroy, executive director at Hedge Funds Care, also a supporter of the PSSP, added: "Studies show that volunteers are most effective, and last the longest, when they have excellent training, ongoing supervision, and receive recognition for their contribution. It is the students who graduate with experience in the PSSP who will be giving them those three components for the years to come and who will make the volunteer effort the success that it can be."

A commitment is necessary and overdue. For close to three decades, the Public Service Scholar Program has been perfecting its model as one of the few public service leadership-building pipelines for New York City and the country. It exemplifies the government's current focus on civic action, but more important, goes a step further to ensure the longevity of a strong and capable public service sector. In addition to the program's classroom learning and the interactions it provides with seasoned leaders, scholars complete a rigorous year of hands-on internships, which qualify

them as attractive and highly capable candidates for public service positions and as future leaders.

The model of the program proves its effectiveness every year. Since it began, over 500 students have completed the program and the vast majority enter public service as paid employees, and many have grown to become leaders. It is their chosen career path, nurtured by the program.

Burns has witnessed the effectiveness of the program. "Almost all scholars complete the program with a greater understanding of government operations and the importance of citizen participation as voters and public servants," she said. "It has long been my hope that more CUNY divisions would adopt the model."

Conroy also sees the program as a model. She said, "Never was their leadership more needed than now. The President's encouragement of volunteers is to be applauded and heeded. But volunteers need leadership to be effective. They need stable, committed employees in leadership at an organization to be the steadfast backbone of any endeavor."

An influential past supporter of the program, Ilene Mack, former program director, grants, at the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, recently said of the program, "It is an effective way to get good leadership into the nonprofit sector where those participating in the program are from populations being served." While she acknowledges other leadership building programs, she strongly believes that what makes this program special is that it nurtures diverse, talented students who are mostly young. This works to ensure that young people are not only trained for this sector, but are able to contribute over a long working career.

Now is the time to ensure a pipeline of trained professionals for public service. A national plan is needed that takes seriously the work of these sectors by building a strong infrastructure for training and developing leaders to help meet the nation's challenges. The program is committed to its model of leadership development and will continue to provide an example of what the country needs, in many replications, to plan for the future.

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## Internship Agency Spotlight

*Continued from page three*

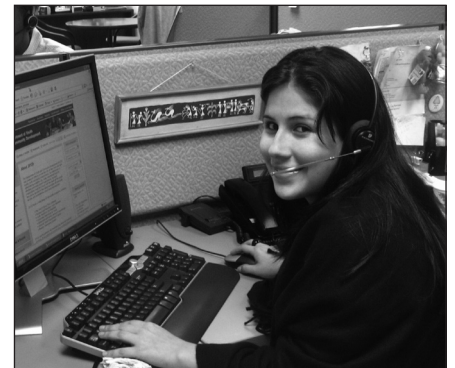
through work on Youth-line, a crisis-intervention resource, by analyzing city census data, attending public-policy conferences and City Hall hearings, and designing data-management tools. They also join site visits to grant recipients such as shelters and internal office assignments that involve interacting with professional staff members.

Causey believes that scholars bring great benefits to the work of the department and her work in the Runaway and Homeless Youth Unit. "Scholars bring a youth voice and perspective to the issues we tackle everyday," she said. "They are confident to share their opinions and observations." Causey is sure that scholars get the opportunity to see why policy plays such a big part in the city's direct services.

Susan Haskell, assistant commissioner, has been a co-supervisor for one scholar, Blanche Roblero. As a first-time supervisor, she says she has already seen the benefit of youth input and insights on crucial topics in the lives of homeless youths. "My first year with a scholar has been a great experience," Haskell said. She believes the program is valuable. "The length of time scholars spend in their internships is a significant benefit to agencies like

ours," she said. "Scholars are able to select their placement, so they come with energy, a commitment to work and have a level of dedication to the field of service."

Haskell is extremely pleased with Roblero's performance. Roblero is equally happy to work with Haskell. She said: "My supervisor gave me the opportunity to work on different projects. I have gone to site visits, runaway homeless youth meetings, worked on Youth Connect, and have written articles for the department's 'Insider'. This internship has enabled me to gain better understanding about the policies and politics of each decision made in the agency. Working here has given me the confirmation I needed to know that this is what I want as my career."



*PSSP Scholar Blanche Roblero on the job at the NYC Dept. of Youth and Community Development*

# THANK YOU

Our program thrives because of you



Thank you for helping us open doors and create opportunities for our next generation of public service leaders. We greatly appreciate the generosity of the following friends of the Public Service Scholar Program in the past year.

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*We sincerely apologize for anyone we may not have included. Please contact our Program Office if you were not acknowledged.*



**Public Service  
Scholar Program**

# Congratulations to the 2009 PROGRAM SCHOLARS

**O**n May 4, the Public Service Scholars celebrated a year of growth and accomplishments with friends, family, alumni, mentors, internship supervisors, funders and



*Professor Elaine Walsh with Maryanne Schretzman, family services coordinator for the City of New York*

city representatives in the City Council Chambers and the Rotunda at City Hall. With 18 students in the general program, this year's cohort of 24 also included six



*NYC Council Member Gale Brewer*

students placed at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. This enormously successful and productive expansion of the program will serve as a model for future collaborations.

Featured speaker Nancy Wackstein, executive director at United Neighborhood Houses, urged scholars to continue their involvement in city government and public service. After 30 years in the public sector, Wackstein is still motivated by "making society a better place." She reminded the scholars of their important roles, saying "Change happens on a local level." Surprise speaker, Maryanne Schretzman, newly appointed by Mayor Bloomberg as Family Services Coordinator, also applauded the efforts of the scholars and stated her belief in the program. The evening's speakers were rounded out by NYC Council Member Gale Brewer, who indicated that the program's history of success qualifies it



*Executive Director at United Neighborhood Houses Nancy Wackstein*

as a national model. She said, "No other group of students is as prepared to deal with the future in public service as [Public Service] Scholars."



*2009 Public Service Scholars*

## Canvassing the homeless on city streets

**O**n Monday, Jan. 26, eleven scholars joined 2,000 other volunteers in making New York's seventh annual count of homeless people, a process known as HOPE, or Homeless Outreach Population Estimate. PSSP Director Elaine Walsh and Susan Nayowith, director, Office of Client Advocacy, NYC Department of Homeless Services, took to the streets on a cold night with scholars Jenny Alcaide, Stephanie Bernardis, Manilyn Borgonis, Narda Carrión, Lenore Costello, Leandro Delgado, Lilith Dollard, Liana Jourdain, Nadine Kaplan, Jenny Palton and Blanche Roblero. This survey of people living on New York City streets, parks and subway stations gives the city a basis for estimating budgets for programs. While their experiences varied from gaining a sense of accomplishment from their tasks to making recommendations about the organization of teams and suggestions for training of volunteers, they all agreed that it was a valuable opportunity to contribute to a city-wide effort.



*Scholars Leandro Delgado, Jenny Palton, Lilith Dollard, Blanche Roblero, Narda Carrion, Jenny Alcaide, Manilyn Borgonis, Lenore Costello and Nadine Kaplan*

Photo credit: Susan Nayowith

**T**he alumni of the Public Service Scholar Program are pursuing careers in public service around our city, representing a cadre of leaders who reflect the changing ethnic, social and gender landscape of society. Below are just a few alumni. We aim to include information about all of our alumni in our newsletters. Please email [PSSP07@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:PSSP07@hunter.cuny.edu) with your current address, work and educational status and any other information you want us to know.

- Richard A. Behrendt, J.D.** • '88  
*Vice President, Senior Estate Planner, Robert W. Baird & Co., Inc.*
- Allen Kleinman** • '88  
*Program Officer, Institute of International Education*
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*Associate Producer, writer and performer for the Fantastic Experimental Latino Theater, Writer and Translator for Finkelstein & Partners*
- Eleonor Velasquez** • '02  
*Director, Government Relations, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials*

- Yvonne Mbewe** • '03  
*Graduate Student (Sept. '09), NYU School of Social Work*
- Jennifer Yeaw** • '03  
*Director, Government Relations, NYC Department of Homeless Services*
- Tedmund Wang** • '06  
*2nd Year Law Student, University of Notre Dame*
- Melissa Ramirez** • '07  
*Admissions and Volunteer Coordinator, Year Up*
- Jamene L. Christian, Esq.** • '87  
*Law Offices of Jamene L. Christian in Tucker, Georgia*
- Megan Butler** • '08  
*Graduate Student (Sept. '09), Columbia University School of Social Work*



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We welcome '97 scholar alumnus Jennifer Shaffer as the program manager for the PSSP. She can be reached at [PSSP07@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:PSSP07@hunter.cuny.edu).  
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