



From Program to Pipeline

The Public Service Scholar Program is no longer a single beacon marking a path to public service careers for students at one college, Hunter. The concept is now being used in a New York State agency. If the hopes of the head of that agency, and the hopes of Elaine Walsh, PSSP Director, are fulfilled, before long, students from other schools in the CUNY system will also get a chance at such a program.

For the Program, it is the first major step outward, one that has been on the mind of Professor Walsh from the beginning. The need for able, informed employees and leaders in state, city and borough agencies, in nonprofit organizations, in political leaders' offices, and indeed in politics itself, has grown rapidly in the 25-year life of the Public Service Scholars Program. And although the Program has grown as much as available funds would permit, it is not fast enough. Now comes the new step, with its wide possibilities. And, no surprise, the agent of change was someone who knew the value of the program first-hand.

The bold step was initiated by Pete Grannis, now Commissioner of the State Department of Environmental Conservation. When Mr. Grannis became Commissioner in April 2007, the PSSP was at the forefront of his thoughts. For two decades while he was a member of the New York State Assembly, he had been a host for

Long Island. His longer hope is eventually to implant the model with students from other CUNY schools. Commissioner Grannis is confident that this will create a pipeline for a diverse, talented pool of students to join the state's effort to preserve and safeguard its resources and environment.



Pilot group of DEC Scholars with Anthony Morenzi, special assistant to the Commissioner

Scholar interns; he was also a donor, guest speaker and advocate. Commissioner Grannis is also a proponent of the CUNY system and considers it an invaluable resource for the health and sustainability of the city. In his new post, he immediately sought to re-create the PSSP model in his agency's Region 2 Office, which encompasses New York City and

The replication was no small task. It took a year of planning involving several groups. Professor Walsh, on learning of Commissioner Grannis's plan, immediately got support from the director of the CUNY Institute for Sustainable Cities (CISC), Professor William D. Solecki, and Outreach Coordinator Carina Molnar. CISC, a supporter of the PSSP, is a natural ally for this project, given its hope to create ways to involve students in environmental education and conservation. The staff welcomed the opportunity to assist.

Anthony Morenzi, special assistant to the Commissioner, who was his chief of staff when he was in the Assembly, assessed the level of interest in the agency for the plan. The agency had no formal internship programs to use for comparison, so Mr. Morenzi

A view from the

DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

by Elaine M. Walsh, Ph.D.



This year brings a major shift in our program. For the first time in 26 years, we are replicating our model! This opportunity was initiated by one of our most committed friends and supporter of our program, the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Pete Grannis, a former Assembly member.

On the cover of the newsletter are details about the evolution of our partnership with Mr. Grannis's department. Together, we are entering new ground with the goal of preparing students for career success early. We anticipate a long relationship that will grow and affect more lives. Commissioner Grannis has presented this amazing opportunity to expand and grow and we are truly grateful for his belief in our program and commitment to the sustainability of the city and society.

As a result of this step, this year also brings our largest cohort of scholars. In all, 25 students are being exposed to policy and other urban issues over this year. Eight of these scholars are placed in six divisions at the department. Details of their work can be found on

page 3. The remaining 17 scholars are working at other government agencies and nonprofit groups, immersed in issues such as economic development, historic preservation, sexuality education in public schools, student civic engagement, sustainable development, nonprofit grant-making, tenant rights and rent reform, and advocacy for rights of children and for youth summer employment. Details about their placements and challenging work assignments are found on pages 4 and 5. Their stipends are generously supported by dedicated elected officials, foundations and individual donors. Their support is even more important during today's unstable financial times.

On page 7, we highlight the role of our internship supervisors since they have a profound affect on our Scholars. They are expected to provide Scholars with substantive work while devoting significant time and effort to seeing they get the most out of the experience. They act as another contact and educational support for our Scholars and their contribution to preparing future leaders is invaluable.

Selecting alumni to feature in our newsletter is always difficult. So many are "out in the trenches." On page 6, we included details about three professionals who credit the PSSP for their career achievements. While all have relocated since their time in the program, their passion for public service remains and they have each found their way to make an impact.

I look forward to updating you, our generous friends and supporters, about our growth and expansion over the next year and beyond. As we look ahead, I am especially encouraged for the field of public service since our President-elect will be coming into office with a firm belief in volunteerism and community organizing. These are exciting times and I am honored to have had your support. We hope for your renewed commitment. It is only through a community effort that we can continue changing lives, creating change in our city and developing a pipeline for the next generation of leaders.

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.

Program to Pipeline

Continued from front cover

focused on providing information about the PSSP and the abilities of its Scholars. He explained to the staff that it was no ordinary internship program. "Scholars take on assignments comparable to those given to higher-degree holding, entry-level professionals," he said. "The accountability on all ends makes the program so effective. PSSP staff and mentors, along with internship supervisors, work as a team to ensure a quality experience for the Scholars and everyone involved."

After being briefed, staff members at the regional and executive levels, in Albany, were impressed with the caliber of Scholars, the high level of the work they accomplish and the unique program model. Six divisions at the agency submitted an inventory of tasks and requirements for an intern, and 13 Scholars were requested. The agency's "buy-in" was accomplished.

The details began to take shape. The pilot, starting with Hunter students, will after evaluation expand to other CUNY schools and possibly other colleges in the area, then throughout the state. At the present, Scholars interning at the agency attend seminars with Scholars in other, more familiar, placements, and adhere to the program's guidelines and expectations. One major, vital change: Stipends for Scholars working at the Grannis department will be covered by the department itself. This means that the quantum leap will not lend to Professor Walsh alone to find major additional grants and gifts.

With the plan agreed to, CISC helped identify candidates, in April 2008. Internet, posters and word-of-mouth were used to attract students interested in an internship at the environmental agency and in participation in the PSSP. Nearly twenty students from many departments attended the first information session. Eight students were accepted after the competitive application process and interviews with officials from the agency. The internships began last September. Details of their placements are included below.

Christina Davis is in the *Bureau of Public Affairs and Environmental Education*, where she seeks to increase environmental awareness and citizen participation. Christina will also create an environmental map of community districts and investigate green solutions to reduce sewer overflow.

Leandro Delgado is in the *Division of Water*, where he is assigned to the storm water project and will inspect construction and industrial sites to ensure compliance with state permits. Leandro will attend meetings with government agencies with a goal of minimizing negative environmental impact.

Brooke Gillespie is placed in the *Office of Natural Resources*. She attends permit application meetings to learn the process required for projects that have an environmental impact. Brooke participates in field work, monitoring changes in restoration sites, conducting vegetation surveys, surveying fish populations and planting trees.

Nadine Kaplan went to the *Division of Solid and Hazardous Materials*. She is researching the Returnable Containers Act, which is part of the city's recycling policy; it provides deposits on certain types of containers. Nadine will develop surveys of distributors' and manufacturers' opinions on the act to help determine its effectiveness.

John Kattenhorn is in the *Office of Natural Resources*. He is collecting data and tracking vulnerable plant species to analyze the condition of a tidal wetlands restoration site in Staten Island. John will create a conservation map to further analyze species causing concern along the shoreline.

DaAe Lim is placed in the *Division of Solid and Hazardous Material* where her primary work is on finding and mapping the sites of past landfills in the city. Research and attendance at meetings about the sanitation history of the city support these efforts.

Jenny Paltan is working in the *Division of Wildlife*, where she will create a survey to assess a Staten Island community's perspective on the white-tailed deer. The goal is to see how to manage overpopulation.

Rachel Zairi is interning in the *Division of Environmental Permits*. She is studying the effects of violations, deed restrictions and mitigation techniques on preserving tidal and freshwater wetlands and will create a document on the value of wetlands regulations as a lead-in to policy recommendations.

This replication opportunity is the first step in the PSSP's growth plan. The focus over the coming years will be to increase capacity, expand service population, and add to internship partnerships and program offerings. These steps will be taken as funding is obtained. The program should become a major force in creating future generations of leaders in public service — the pipeline that Commissioner Grannis and Professor Walsh envision.



Public service agencies and offices in New York City contribute to the professional growth of our Scholars every year. Scholars in challenging assignments learn directly from accomplished professionals. This experience is unrivaled by any other program in the city. Over this academic

year, these 17 Scholars are working in three public agencies, ten nonprofit organizations and the offices of four elected officials. Eight more scholars are working with the State Department of Environmental Conservation and are discussed on page 3. Here are a few details on the 17.

Jenny Alcaide is in the office of Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh of District 74 on the East Side of Manhattan she works primarily on the proposed Household Scalding Safety Act. She does research, tracks legislation, and communicates with the community and city and state agencies and elected officials as part of a drive to limit the maximum temperature of tap water in homes. In addition, Jenny will help coordinate the work of a tenant association by reaching out to community leaders with fliers and attending board meetings.

Stephanie Benardis is placed with the City Administration for Children's Services in the Child Care and Head Start program. Stephanie works with WHEDCO (Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation where she will increase monitoring of informal child-care providers in the Bronx to check their effectiveness and check safety measures. She will also work on the Child and Adult Care Food Program, creating awareness to service providers. She will write a position paper for the Commissioner of Children's Services on recent food standards and the agency stance on regulations.

Manilyn Borgonis is working in the office of Assemblymember Micah Kellner of District 65 on the East Side of Manhattan. Her primary focus will be on landmarking a district in Yorkville,

Manhattan, to support a proposal for a historic district. Manilyn will survey the area for buildings with historic significance. She will also do legislative research and attend hearings and policy-related meetings.

Jessica Brathwaite is placed with Citizens Committee for Children of New York in the Youth Action Program, which

tions in the Bronx. He will provide details on the jobs created by these corporations, as well as the lack of them, with the goal of promoting transparency and accountability to residents. Emmanuel will attend community board meetings to enhance community leaders' knowledge of the economic development in their districts.

Narda Carrion is placed at the office of State Senator Liz Krueger, District 26 in Manhattan, where she is researching health policy for next year's state budget. Narda will work with other staffers on a flu drive as well as the Youth Civics Project, where she will teach students about how the state government operates. She will engage students by facilitating interactive activities, debates and lectures. Narda will also

attend public meetings, organize forums and plan events.

Lenore Costello is interning at the New York Industrial Retention Network, seeking to strengthen the city's manufacturing sector and promote sustainable development. She will compile the organization's monthly newsletter, update the network's city-wide "green" manufacturers' directory, and maintain the website. Lenore will attend meetings and meet with manufacturers to get a better sense of the issues and challenges for economic development in the city.



encourages civic engagement from high school students. She will research underfunded school-based community centers and summer youth employment to support city allocation increases. Jessica will also attend and participate in public policy forums held by the committee and meetings with elected officials. In the spring, Jessica will help organize the annual trip to Albany for Advocacy Day.

Emmanuel Cabrera is working with Good Jobs New York to document and analyze subsidies given by economic development agencies to large corpora-

Continued on next page

Lilith Kaiyeon Dollard interned with the Women's Center for Education and Career Advancement until November. After budget cuts, she shifted to the Lenox Hill Neighborhood House in legal advocacy. At the women's center, Lilith focused on updating two resources on their website — the Self-Sufficiency Calculator, which helps low-wage workers plan for financial independence, and the Domestic Violence and Veterans' information pages. In her new position, Lilith is to attend coalition and advocacy meetings, research government health benefits in surrounding states, create fact sheets about public benefits, and help clients complete food stamp applications.

Tanya Haynes is placed with the Office of Children and Family Services as an assistant to the director of the New York Regional Office. She was originally working on a new initiative, "Improved Outcomes for Children," giving her a chance to learn about how policy is carried out and also about relationships between governments and agencies needed for new policy proposals. This project was one of the first casualties of the budget crisis and Tanya has had first-hand experience seeing how an organization plans for fiscal uncertainty while ensuring that vulnerable families are safeguarded. Tanya will also participate in high-level policy meetings with state and city officials.

Melinda Ho is placed with the Neighborhood Family Service Coalition, working to promote better conditions for children and families in neighborhoods through the Campaign for Summer Jobs. Her main focus is Youth Action Day, where she will work with youths as they come together to show legislators the importance of their summer jobs. She will secure support and participation from elected officials and will also train youths in advocating effectively before their government representatives.

Liana Jourdain is placed in City Council Member Gale A. Brewer's office in the Sixth District on the West Side of Manhattan. There she is a producer and floor manager on Ms. Brewer's public access TV show, "This Side of Central

Park." Liana will also create a spreadsheet detailing Ms. Brewer's proposed and approved legislation to serve as a reference for her office. It may also be printed for her constituents. During the year, Liana also plans to attend policy and City Council meetings.

Liat Krawczyk is placed with Hospital Audiences Inc., working in the Prevention-Education Program to bring the arts to hospitals, mental institutions, juvenile detention centers and homeless shelters. Liat will utilize the Photo-Voice learning service in inner city high schools, supplying students with cameras and enabling them to record and thus better understand their community's strengths and problems. She will also engage policy makers through a community-government approach.

Johanna Rice is placed with the Sexuality Information Education Center of the United States. She will coordinate and execute a campaign to improve education about sexuality in city public schools by organizing parents and teens as well as collaborating with agencies such as Planned Parenthood, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual Community Center of New York. Johanna will also support this effort by drafting campaign materials, planning coalition meetings, and communicating with the Department of Education.

Blanchi Roblero is placed with the Department of Youth and Community Development, and is working with the Runaway Homeless Youth Unit to ensure that adequate care is provided to those taken in by various agencies. She participates in site visits, council meetings and workshops on public policy and budget issues. Blanchi is also assigned to Youth Connect, where she will provide information to parents and youth about after-school programs, shelters and crisis centers through a free phone line.

Hamsatou Sako is placed with the Goddard Riverside Settlement House, with the Goddard Single Room Occupancy Law Project on the West Side, managing an average of eight client-intake cases. She works directly with tenants and

clients to resolve housing conflicts and will organize and provide outreach in buildings, disseminate meeting notices and facilitate tenant meetings. His projects include working to end illegal hotels, bring about real rent reform and stop anti-tenant harassment and anti-gentrification in Harlem. Hamsatou will attend coalition meetings and assist in the mobilization of tenants for rallies, forums and city council hearings.

Chantale Soekhoe is placed at the Association to Benefit Children (ABC) which provides education and support programs and advocacy services for disadvantaged children and families. Chantale works in the Preschool/Head Start division. She is reviewing the new regulations that impact educational services for these programs and is also learning the organizational and management issues related to receiving funding from the various levels of government and how this impacts non-profit organizations.

Anna Thomas is placed with United Way of New York City. She works primarily with the Linkages Program to strengthen city nonprofits by developing leadership at the board level through training and workshops. She is also involved in grant-making, for which she summarizes the accomplishments and challenges of organizations receiving grants from United Way. Anna will also help shape United Way's strategic planning.



**Public Service
Scholar Program**

ALUMNI IN ACTION

A wide reach for our Scholar graduates



Adrienne Ryder '86

When Adrienne Ryder was a Scholar and interning in the Office of Economic Development for the City of New York, she was sure her career would focus on economic development. After a year of paid employment with the office, she moved to Casper, Wyoming, which was then in the middle of a fiscal crisis. Few jobs, especially in economic development, were available.

But still with a passion to make a difference, Adrienne took work as a job coach in a district-wide special education program, teaching vocational skills to disabled children. Adrienne says: "While I had no direct experience in this field, I had not lost that strong desire learned through the PSSP to work in public service. What I didn't expect was to really enjoy my position and stay there 10 years."

Adrienne next accepted a post as career facilitator at new high school career center. For the last 11 years, she has been developing career-exploration programs and promoting career and technical education throughout the state. Her job is fulfilling. "I meet with community and business leaders to promote youth employment and career opportunities," she says. "I collaborate with state leaders to work on funding and policy issues. And perhaps most important, I have personal and meaningful contact with students and get to make a difference in their lives."

Reading past PSSP newsletters, Adrienne said, made her feel "removed from the experience because so many of the alumni end up in New York, impacting thousands, if not millions of people." "Eventually," she said, "I realized it isn't the size of the job or the location, it is the purpose."

Siobhan Callahan '95

Siobhan Callahan is pursuing her passion for public service in Bremen, Germany. She works as a research assistant at the Center for Social Policy at the University of Bremen and is finishing her master's degree in Social Policy.



For six years after she arrived in Germany, Siobhan taught English at private language schools, businesses, and for the German Navy. She soon decided on a different career path. Siobhan says, "Although I enjoyed teaching English, I always felt it wasn't exactly my niche." She applied to the University of Bremen and is certain that her experience as a Scholar was instrumental in her

acceptance and performance as a graduate student. She says: "I found I was more than able to keep pace with the other students, thanks to all I had learned about policy during my time in the PSSP."

Siobhan feels privileged to have been a part of the program and encourages future scholars to enjoy the experience. "In addition to acquiring a thorough knowledge of social policy in New York City," she says, "Scholars receive a lot of personal attention and consideration. Keep in mind that even if you don't see the benefits directly after graduation, it very well may occur later—even years later, as it was in my case."

Antoinette D'Orazio '89

While living in Westchester County, Antoinette D'Orazio is thrilled to be doing her part in public service as the director of student services at the Pace University School of Law.



Antoinette began her career as schedule coordinator in the challenging office of Ruth W. Messinger, then Manhattan Borough President. Ms. Messinger was an instructor for the PSSP seminar and quickly became a role model for Antoinette. Antoinette remembers her well. "Ruth Messinger would come to class with a bag of popcorn that she had purchased in the lobby," she recalls. "She would kick off her shoes, sit on top of the desk, and tell the most amazing stories about city government. She inspired me to go the extra mile in whatever I did."

Antoinette's job at Pace keeps her busy. She is a counselor and student advisor on all non-academic matters such as mental health and financial aid. She oversees the Law School's student organizations and assists in writing policies for students. She loves her job "because it is diverse, interesting, and gives me many opportunities to help others."

Antoinette offers the following advice to scholars: "Get involved in projects at your placement, pick the brains of your colleagues, have lunch with them and join them after work. An internship is one of the best ways to secure a job after graduation. I graduated in 1990 when the economy was suffering as it is today, and the PSSP helped me secure a position right after graduation when many of my classmates had difficulties."

The important role of **INTERNSHIP SUPERVISORS**

Attracting a Public Service Scholar is just the beginning for internship supervisors. This year, 85 agencies vied for scholar interns and 18 were selected. The supervisors quickly learn that the PSSP is unlike any other internship program. The expectations are placed extremely high, not only on Scholar performance but also on supervisors. As mentors, educators and role-models, they have a large impact on a scholar's career development.

Before an internship begins, the directors of the program provide orientation and training for supervisors. This one-day session outlines the program and explicitly lays out supervisor responsibilities. It also helps supervisors grasp the abilities of the Scholars and the supervisors' potential to influence policy and the field of public service when their former interns begin to build major careers.

A current supervisor, Sheri Gruber, director of policy and procedure at the City Administration for Children's Services, found the training of great value. "I had never supervised a Scholar," she said, "so it was helpful to have all the expectations laid out for me. It was especially important for me to hear from Dr. Walsh how essential it was for us to include our Scholar in high-level meetings and activities."

Another supervisor, Patty Reitkopf, director of on-site programs for Hospital Audiences Inc., concurred. "The training session definitely prepared me for the role as a supervisor," she said. "I came back to my office and set up my Scholar's physical work space and considered specific work details so that she felt welcomed on her first day. This made the orientation process seamless, giving my scholar a sense of familiarity as well as our agency immediate quality work time."

Lauren Mactas Bowles, director of Cassidy's Place at the Association to Benefit Children, enjoyed learning about the variety of agencies where Scholars go for their placements. At the session, every supervisor has the opportunity to introduce her or his organization and describe the work assignments for

their Scholars. As a first-time supervisor, Ms. Bowles was impressed by the "broad range of public service organizations" involved.

Scholars and supervisors begin their relationship

by creating a work-learning contract to serve as a measure for Scholar progress over the year. Assignments and projects are outlined so that both sides are clear on responsibilities and expectations. While the Scholar commits to the internship, supervisors must provide ways to enhance workplace skills as well as assure other things, such as these: challenging assignments that contribute to understanding of decision-making and operations in public service; work on a substantive policy area; and attendance at City Council meetings, public hearings, organizational and community group meetings. In return, agencies get bright, motivated college students involved in policy or other urban-centered work that might otherwise be postponed or lost in the shuffle. The result is a "win-win" situation.

When Ms. Reitkopf was asked why her agency once again requested a scholar, her response was similar to that of other involved organizations. In prior years, she said, Scholars have been of significant assistance with important assignments. This year, she said, "With recessionary budgets looming large for nonprofits, funding to support the amount of staff members necessary to provide a full complement of services is diminishing." "A Scholar," she continued, "is probably the best possible way to increase staff as it not only provides another worker, but one who is intelligent, motivated and interested in the agency's mission and brings a long list of talents."



NYS Assembly Member Micah Kellner challenges Scholars to Go Green!

With the goal of decreasing the use of plastic bags by local shoppers, Assembly Member Micah Kellner initiated his Go Green! Challenge and is giving away totes throughout his East Side, Yorkville and Roosevelt Island district. The idea behind the campaign is to promote the use of durable reusable bags for grocery trips and other shopping needs instead of using plastic bags. In November 2008, Assembly Member Kellner spoke with Scholars about the damage and waste from plastic bags on the environment and encouraged the use of reusable bags such as his Go Green totes.

Annual Holiday Celebration

Scholars, friends, alumni, mentors, placement supervisors and political leaders gathered on December 8th at the Hunter College School of Social Work for a cup of holiday cheer to celebrate the PSSP's 26th year!



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www.hunter.cuny.edu/pssp
ewalsh@hunter.cuny.edu

DIRECTOR Elaine M. Walsh, Ph.D.
WRITER Kristy Jelenik
DESIGNER Andrew Ross

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PHOTOGRAPHER
Susan Nayowith, Ph.D.
EDITORIAL BOARD
Ursula Mahoney
Betsy Wade

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Hunter College
695 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10065

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