



# Grand challenges in public administration

**Annual Meeting 2018**

National Academy of Public Administration



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NATIONAL ACADEMY OF  
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# Foreword

**In November 2018, the National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy or NAPA) held its Annual Meeting. The Academy is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization established in 1967 and granted a congressional charter in 1984 to assist government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. The Academy has nearly 900 Fellows, including former cabinet officers, Members of Congress, governors, mayors, and state legislators as well as prominent scholars, senior career public administrators, and business executives.**

The 2018 meeting featured an all-star cast of keynote speakers and insightful discussions to address the topic of “Grand Challenges in Public Administration.” KPMG worked with the Academy to highlight key findings and takeaways from this meeting.

Consistent with the meeting’s theme, breakout sessions on specific topics included:

- Predictions on the future of government, including in the areas of artificial intelligence and emergency management
- Importance of building social equity into policy and practice
- Role of women in public administration
- Revitalization of the middle class
- Role of state and local governments in managing elections in the United States
- Reflections on the field of public administration 50 years after the famous Minnowbrook Conference
- Reform of the federal government’s civil service system and hiring process.

Other annual meeting activities included:

- The prestigious Elmer B. Staats Lecture was given by Beth Colbert, CEO of Initiative Skillful at the Markle Foundation, and Jen Pahlka, Executive Director of Code for America.
- The prestigious James E. Webb Lecture was given by Frank Weil, Chair of The Intersector Project.
- The 2018 George Graham Award for Exceptional Service to the Academy was presented to Academy Fellow Mort Downey for his decades-long contributions and dedication to the organization.



**Terry Gerton**  
**President and CEO**  
National Academy of Public Administration



**Jeff Steinhoff**  
**Managing Director**  
KPMG Government Institute





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No Time to Wait, Part 2:



# Welcome and opening remarks

**Anne Khademian**, Chair, Academy Board of Directors; Presidential Fellow, Office of the President, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

**Terry Gerton**, President and CEO, National Academy of Public Administration

## Background

Anne Khademian, Board Chair, welcomed everyone to the annual meeting. She noted that this is a particularly exciting time for the Academy for the following reasons:

- The Academy’s recently completed strategic planning process identified five major operational goals and 18 operational objectives.
- Thought leadership—grounded in the Grand Challenges in Public Administration campaign—is a major new component of the Academy’s strategy. For the past decade, the Academy has continued to focus on delivering the highest-quality funded organizational studies for federal and other governmental agencies at all levels of government. These critically important organizational studies are enhanced through expanded thought leadership.
- The Grand Challenges in Public Administration is a major visionary effort, and the energy around this initiative is tremendous. NAPA needs Fellows to be engaged in the Grand Challenges campaign as it continues to build.
- NAPA has been working on broader Fellow engagement, including establishing an Ambassador program to engage our Fellows across the country.
- Over the past year, NAPA increased partnerships with academic institutions and expanded thought leadership. NAPA has new partnerships with students as the organization had 10 interns this summer, some of whom worked on special projects with Standing Panels.
- Standing Panels have expanded their role and have been providing important thought leadership, including a series of working papers by the Standing Panel on Executive Organization and Management on strengthening organizational health and performance in government.
- All of these activities are a vital part of the new energy at the Academy.
- Working across the sectors and across the country is critical. NAPA wants to be a true *national* Academy, not a Washington, DC-centric institution. NAPA’s work contributes to the entire country, and Grand Challenges covers all levels of government.

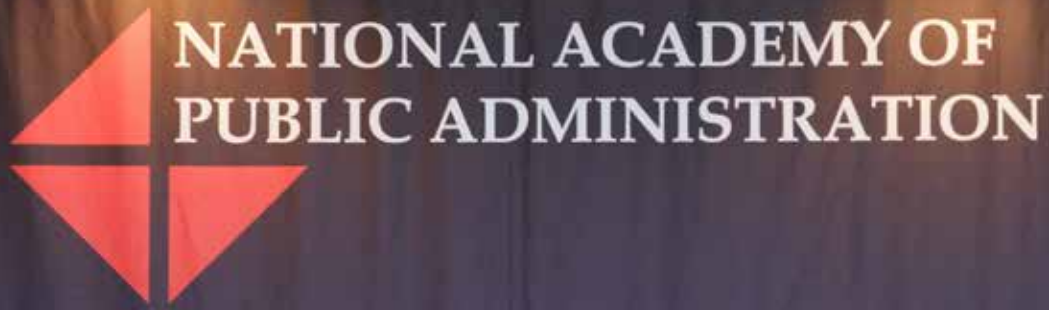
Khademian thanked President Terry Gerton for her outstanding leadership and expressed appreciation to the Academy staff for their work preparing for the conference and supporting the organization’s activities every day.

President Gerton welcomed everyone to the 2018 annual meeting. A central theme of the sessions is Grand Challenges as NAPA is beginning a year-long campaign to identify these challenges. NAPA intends to lead the public administration community on this quest and then to serve as a platform for the community’s work in resolving them.

**Gerton expressed appreciation to the Fellows and staff for their work in developing and supporting the meeting. She also thanked the sponsors of the fall meeting that have made this event possible:**

- Management Concepts
- Ernst and Young
- Arizona State University Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions
- Federal Employee Defense Services
- Baruch College Marke School of Public and International Affairs
- Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs
- Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs
- University of Nebraska at Omaha College of Public Affairs and Community Service
- ICF
- KPMG LLP
- The Ohio State University John Glenn School of Public Affairs
- University of Washington Evans School of Public Policy and Governance

Gerton concluded her opening remarks by introducing the first session.



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# Plenary session: No time to wait, Part 2

*Sponsored by: Management Concepts*

**Moderator:**

**Lahaja Furaha**, Organizational Culture Practice Lead and Senior Human Capital Advisor,  
Management Concepts

**Panelists:**

**Donald Kettl**, Professor, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs,  
University of Texas at Austin

**Joshua Gotbaum**, Guest Scholar, Economic Studies, Brookings Institution

**Doris Hausser**, Senior Advisor for Civil Service Reform, U.S. Office of Personnel Management



## Background

In 2017, the Academy released an independent Panel report, *No Time to Wait*, funded by the Samuel Freeman Charitable Trust. This year, the Academy received sponsorship from the Freeman Trust and the Volcker Alliance to do a follow-up study. Professor Don Kettl ably chaired both Panels, and provided a high-level summary. He was then joined by Panel members Joshua Gotbaum and Doris Hausser for a discussion moderated by Management Concepts' Lahaja Furaha.

Conflict over the government workforce has never been greater. From protecting federal jobs to making it easier to fire poorly performing employees, political battles over the government workforce have grown increasingly fierce. While these battles are being fought, however, the nature of government's work is fundamentally changing—and will continue to do so over the next decade. In July 2017, an Academy Panel released *No Time to Wait: Building a Public Service for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, which provided a call to action on the future of the federal public service.<sup>1</sup> The Panel concluded that the challenges were so great and the potential impacts so serious there was truly no time to wait.

Building on *No Time to Wait*, a new white paper presents a more detailed game plan for putting mission first, driving the principles of merit always, and for ensuring accountability to both. Discussions around civil service transformation too often focus on the wrong problem. The largest federal human capital challenge is not hiring or firing, but how to most effectively develop and utilize the current set of almost 2.1 million federal civilian employees.

Moving forward, technology and automation will transform the nature of work. All jobs will continue to change. The pace of change will increase, and organizations cannot afford to fall behind. The current federal civil service system has become so complex and burdensome that some agencies give up—contracting out their work instead of seeking to understand how to most appropriately get work done. *No Time to Wait* argued that civil service transformation must be built on three elements: (1) putting mission first, (2) driving the principles of the merit system always, and (3) ensuring accountability for both. The panelists explored the next steps in civil service transformation as policy makers address this vexing challenge.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed

- The key to civil service transformation is to move the federal government from a culture of compliance—concentrating on following the rules and checking the boxes—to a focus on performance and learning.
- The current over-defined job specifications of the existing civil service system should be replaced with a competency-based, talent-management model.
  - Competencies should be vested in individuals.
  - Individuals should be matched to missions, instead of having static occupations define both.
- We must reinforce the pursuit of the merit system principles. Specifically, we should transform our federal civil service to advance the merit system principles while freeing them from the unnecessary rules and regulations that too often bind them.
- The federal government needs a strong enterprise-level entity to lead the transformation of its human capital system. This entity must focus on encouraging flexibility and innovation in federal agencies, promoting government-wide merit system principles, and developing a learning system to ensure that government can move forward at the speed of innovation.
- Leading a human capital revolution will require a lot of thought around which functions of human capital should be centralized, and which functions should be decentralized to departments and agencies.
  - Under this new system, the big change for agencies would be a shift to integrating human capital managers with top agency leaders and to integrating human capital in the leadership strategy to accomplish the agency's mission.
  - The big change for the central personnel entity would be a shift from a focus on rules and compliance to a focus on performance and learning.
- Ultimately, the federal government's human capital backbone—Title 5 of U.S. Code, which has not been updated for more than two generations—will need to be transformed. It is difficult to lead for the future when trapped so deeply in the past. Table 1 provides a synopsis of the functions to centralize and decentralize in leading the human capital revolution.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.napawash.org/uploads/Academy\\_Studies/No-Time-to-Wait\\_Building-a-Public-Service-for-the-21st-Century.pdf](https://www.napawash.org/uploads/Academy_Studies/No-Time-to-Wait_Building-a-Public-Service-for-the-21st-Century.pdf).

**Table 1: Leading the federal human capital revolution**

<b>Functions to decentralize</b>	<b>Functions to centralize</b>
The big change of agencies: a shift to integrating human capital managers with top agency leaders-and to integrating human capital in the leadership strategy to accomplish the agency's mission	The big change for the central personnel entity: a shift from a focus on rules and compliance to a focus on performance and learning
Devise human capital strategies to accomplish the mission	Trust agencies focus on mission but verify results
Enable all agencies to use the flexibilities permitted to any agency	License flexibilities as allowed by law
Create a culture of experimentation through pilot projects, driven by evidence	Create a government-wide system of learning from agency-based pilots
Allow larger agencies wide flexibility in pursuit of mission	Provide support to smaller agencies that are without larger strategic human capital support
Promote merit in operation of agency human capital systems	Ensure pursuit of merit principles, government-wide
Drive accountability through performance	Create government-wide language of accountability through data







# What will government look like in 2040?

**Hosted by:** The Standing Panel on Executive Organization and Management

**Moderator:**

**David Rejeski**, Director, Technology, Innovation and the Environment Project, Environmental Law Institute

**The future of artificial intelligence, augmented intelligence, and alternative ways of governing**

**David Bray**, Executive Director, People-Centered Internet; Senior Fellow, Institute for Human-Machine Cognition

**Engaged government: Five predictions for 2040**

**Lora Frecks**, PhD candidate, University of Nebraska at Omaha

**Networked government: Managing data, knowledge and services**

**Lori Gordon**, Strategist, BRAINQ



## Background

Everyone wants to know “what is next.” The foundations of tomorrow are based on the ideas and aspirations of leaders today. It is not a matter of whether government will move to intelligent automation, it is how soon and whether public administrators will be well prepared.

The presenters each authored a chapter for a recent book, *Government for the Future: Reflection and Vision for Tomorrow's Leaders*, by the IBM Center for The Business of Government. The future of artificial intelligence (AI), augmented intelligence, and alternative ways of governing can initially play out in a positive or a negative way or in some combination thereof. It is up to public administrators to embrace the coming changes and prepare their organizations today for what will be a new way of doing business tomorrow.

### Key insights presented and issues discussed:

- The optimistic view of AI is that it will immediately produce a people-centered, or augmented intelligence, approach. By pairing humans with machine learning, AI can amplify such human strengths as empathy and creativity with the support of such machine strengths as an analysis of multiple options. AI algorithms will provide support that still requires a human to act or to decide. AI-supported assistance can be used by individuals seeking government information. For example, several cities have now used AI to establish “311” telephone lines and mobile apps that provide the public with critical information about nonemergency city services.
- A pessimistic view of AI, by contrast, is that these new forms of technology could be used to further divide the populace and produce a surveillance state along the lines of the Chinese social credit system. An increased use of AI, if not managed properly, could inadvertently reinforce existing implicit biases and confirmation biases embedded in current data sets (such as the prevalence of crime in different neighborhoods). And AI could essentially decertify the “expertise professions”—such as lawyers, doctors, insurance agents, and so forth—that are important forms of self-governance undergirding democratic societies. Those jobs are also critical foundations of the middle class.
- What can be expected of government by 2040?
  1. Government will be more agile—experimenting with small trials of multiple innovative solutions derived from a wide variety of sources.
  2. Government will increasingly rely on AI, providing public agencies with the information necessary to make more informed decisions and allowing employees to focus more on higher-value tasks.
  3. “Soft skills” needed for effective collaboration, such as communications methods, negotiation techniques, project management, and storytelling, will be more important as problems become more complex. These collaboration skills are seldom

being taught in schools today, but will be critical to navigating “horizontal” public challenges within “vertical” agencies and programs. For example, the use of storytelling helps individuals and groups to share their perspectives and reasoning in a manner that is easily comprehended by others.

4. Volunteerism will become more common. If individuals have more personal time as a result of AI, they will be more likely to volunteer in their communities and work side-by-side with government employees to coproduce public services. Community members will be frequent and active volunteer participants in the work of government.
  5. Citizen trust in government may rise. Government (especially at the federal level) has been coping with a long-term loss of public trust since the 1960s. But, with more agility to deliver effective and efficient programs together with much greater collaboration and engagement, the public’s faith could be rebuilt.
- In the future, government will be more networked than ever. A key responsibility of public employees will be to manage data, knowledge, and services.
    - With rapid advances in technology, government at all levels could radically improve the ability to engage and involve more of the American public in a positive way in policy and administrative processes that impact their daily lives.
    - Technology could enable government to establish networked teams to perform its work. These teams could crowdsource the priority topics or challenges of the moment, then bring cross-disciplinary talent, research and ideas to develop solutions that they tailor to individual citizen needs.
    - Three types of government managers will be especially important:
      - Data managers—to oversee a virtual government workforce comprising teams (including AI resources) that aggregate data in digital workspaces and process it almost instantaneously via the eighth-generation wireless network.
      - Knowledge integration managers—to bridge knowledge, methods, data, and investigative communities by serving as catalysts and conveners who can bring together disciplines and experts from different domains to pursue shared research challenges.
      - Customized service managers—to use the data aggregated by data teams and analyzed by knowledge integration teams to provide tailored resources and services to constituents at the community level.



# Artificial intelligence

## The future of work, ethics, and education in public administration (and beyond): What we need to know and why

**Hosted by:** The Standing Panel on Technology Leadership and Artificial Intelligence Working Group

### **Moderator:**

**Alan Shark**, Chair, Standing Panel on Technology Leadership; Executive Director, Public Technology Institute

### **Panelists:**

**James Hendler**, Director, Institute for Data Exploration and Application, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

**Priscilla Regan**, Professor of Government and Politics, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University

**Karen Shrum**, Principal, Government and Public Sector, Ernst and Young LLP

**Karl Maschino**, Chief Administrative Officer/Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Government Accountability Office

## Background

Over the past year, the Academy's Standing Panel on Technology and Public Leadership has explored the implications of AI in three major areas: (1) ethics, (2) the future of work, and (3) education in public administration. The results of this work were presented and discussed at this session. These presentations were preceded by an overview of AI's evolution, progress, and current limits.

## Key insights and issues discussed

- Views regarding AI have moved from deep skepticism about its potential capabilities to alarm over the prospect of AI surpassing human capabilities and escaping human control. This reflects, in part, the rapid progress in AI due to significant advances in three areas: (1) deep learning and machine learning generally, (2) the achievements of IBM's Watson and "cognitive computing," and (3) and the Semantic Web.
- It is important to understand the abilities and limits of AI. Although AI performs at higher levels than humans on certain, very clearly defined visual tasks based on extensive training with lots of categorized images, many tasks require a contextual understanding only possessed by humans at this time. Harnessing the positive potential of AI for transforming work will require a strategic approach. Like any other technology, AI should be guided by clear objectives and an understanding of how applications complement and enhance the capabilities of the workforce. Also, the ethical dimension must be considered in decisions about whether to rely on AI. In the event of a house fire, for example, it may be necessary to distinguish correctly between a human and an animal and decide which one to save. Given the limits of AI at this stage of its evolution and unforeseen circumstances, humans must continue to have a significant role in work.
- The ethical issues associated with AI are no longer purely hypothetical. A practical guide on the ethics of AI is needed to help guide these choices to ensure accountability. Ethical issues were discussed in five areas: (1) information privacy, (2) anonymity, (3) discrimination, (4) autonomy, and (5) surveillance.
  - Recurring questions across these areas include whether the use of information by AI systems and the basis for results are understandable and consistent with past practice and expectations. These questions go to accountability and legitimacy of decision making, which are at the heart of public administration.
  - Key concerns raised regarding AI systems included the unwitting inclusion of bias in the programming of systems and the uncritical acceptance of computer-generated results. Various ways of addressing these concerns were discussed, including broadening the range of groups involved in programming to combat unconscious bias, rigorous testing of systems before deployment, regular auditing of systems, and robust grievance procedures for citizens.
- AI has the potential to be more disruptive than our past experience with automation because it can automate higher-order tasks far beyond the capabilities of robotic process automation (RPA). Several recent projections suggest the potential of AI to dramatically disrupt the world of work. According to Gartner, between 30 and 40 percent of processes will be impacted by RPA, the most basic form of work automation. This technology is already used in many government organizations to automate basic tasks that are repetitive, involve more than one system, and follow very explicit steps. The Everest Group predicts a 30 to 35 percent reduction in entry-level roles. The 2018 World Economic Forum Report points to negative as well as positive implications. While developments in automation technologies and AI could result in 75 million displaced jobs, the resulting shakeup in the division of labor between humans and machines could translate into 58 million net new jobs by 2022.
- Effective communication and engagement are critical. Uncertainty and fear of displacement can hinder the adoption new technologies and different ways of working. It is important to communicate how AI applications will affect how work is done and the future roles of employees. Getting employee input into plans for designing and implementing these applications can help build support and mitigate the risk of unanticipated problems.
- An important way of engaging a public sector workforce in a change program is to emphasize how new technology and ways of doing things will help advance the mission by allowing employees to spend more time on higher value-added work for which they must be trained and prepared.
- From an educational standpoint, a model curriculum on AI could include the following six modules: (1) introduction to AI; (2) survey of existing and possible use of AI; (3) ethical issues surrounding AI; (4) IT infrastructure and the changing nature of the civil service; (5) implementing AI programs; and (6) AI research projects. As part of AI education, analytical skills must be strengthened to enable more informed use of these technologies. Technical knowledge of AI needs to be complemented by people skills that support implementation and acceptance of AI projects. This insight draws on the increasing recognition that effective IT leadership depends on social skills as much as technical prowess.





# Revitalizing the middle class in America

## Moderator:

**Mark Pisano**, Professor of the Practice of Public Administration, University of Southern California

## Panelists:

**Barry Van Lare**, Independent Consultant

**Maria Aristigueta**, Director and Charles P. Messick Chair in Public Administration, School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Delaware, and Leader of the Biden Challenge on “How to Revitalize the Middle Class”

**Philip Joyce**, Senior Associate Dean and Professor of Public Policy, Maryland School of Public Policy, University of Maryland

**Joe Wholey**, Visiting Scholar, University of Delaware and Professor Emeritus, University of Southern California

**Angela Hanks**, Director, Center for Post-Secondary and Economic Success Center for Law and Social Policy

**Russell Krumnow**, Director, Economic Mobility and Poverty Project Convergence Center for Policy Resolution



## Background

A workforce with the skills necessary to meet current and future demands is vital to the growth of our economy, the sustainability of critical governmental services, the development of the middle class, and the future of our democratic system. The Academy's Intergovernmental Systems Panel is exploring the ways in which the public and private sectors will need to adjust to meet that challenge.

Issues affecting middle class demographics include decreasing fertility rates, both in the U.S. and globally; a diminishing working age population; and widening skills gaps. All of the issues and opportunities addressed in this session require intergovernmental coordination and collaboration.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed

- Many who aspire to and identify as middle class are, in fact, part of the working poor. Only 11 percent of jobs in the U.S. pay enough to sustain a family of four, with 43 percent of Americans (53 million households) living under the poverty level or at the ALICE (Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed) level. Wages have not been growing even as the unemployment rate has fallen.
- Education plays a key role in addressing the challenges of achieving and sustaining a middle-class status and earning a living wage.
- The unemployed and underemployed encounter a number of barriers to work, including limited access to high paying jobs; lack of quality, affordable childcare; disability; prior criminal convictions; and addiction to opioids and other drugs. They often do not have sufficient access to transportation to get to and from work. Two-year college degrees, vocational programs, and apprenticeships are underutilized by many people who would greatly benefit from them.
- A wide array of potential approaches to expanding the middle class were discussed, many of which do not require large-scale federally managed solutions.

These included:

- Tax policy changes, such as expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit
  - Adjustments to employment policies, such as eliminating “no-poach agreements” for lower-wage earners
  - Modifying bank regulations so that individuals living from paycheck to paycheck have affordable banking options
  - Rethinking education to help ensure all children are being prepared to make a good living
  - Increasing access to affordable education by expanding two-year college programs, trade schools, and apprenticeships
  - Reforming disability programs to incentivize individuals to return to the labor force
  - Creating a dashboard to share data and information that clarifies and amplifies the broader implications of the struggling middle class
  - Expanding access to affordable childcare
  - Leveraging nongovernmental resources, such as nonprofits and public-private partnerships
  - Working to engage all stakeholders and address new ways to tackle employment issues differently.
- While many of these potential solutions would benefit from federal policy changes, none is the sole responsibility of one level of government. Success will require actions by all levels of government and across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. It will be important to use an intergovernmental and cross-sectoral approach in addressing middle class challenges.



# Emergency management: 2030

## **Moderator:**

**Kay Goss**, President, World Disaster Management, LLC

## **Panelists:**

**Wendy Walsh**, Director of FEMA Higher Education

**Russell Strickland**, Director of Maryland Emergency Management

**Charles Werner**, Chair, National Council for Public Safety-UAS

**Kevin Sligh**, Director of Emergency Response, US Coast Guard

**Dirk Fillpot**, Communications Coordinator, Office of Communications, USDA

## Background

This panel examined four future aspects of emergency management (EM): (1) the academic foundation of the profession, (2) emerging technology contributions, (3) collaborative opportunities, and (4) intergovernmental challenges. It also addressed the need for EM professionals to more appropriately assign accountability for results and focus on resilience and readiness in the face of increasing threats and challenges.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed

- The relatively new academic discipline of EM (starting with civil defense during the Cold War) and homeland security (after 9/11) must continue to evolve to be ready for the practically unimaginable challenges of 2030. Moving forward, millennials will be most of the leaders in EM. Skills in technology, collaboration (building trust and partnering), and interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary analysis will become even more important. Leaders need to be flexible, creative problem-solvers and be able to draw upon critical research and data analytics.
- There is an urgent need to build EM knowledge and capabilities not just for today but for 2030 and beyond at all levels of government, as well as in the private and nonprofit sectors. This past year's unimaginably destructive hurricanes, ferocious wildfires, and other critical threats (both in the United States and around the world) demonstrate beyond doubt the critical importance of EM.
- Given more frequent and more destructive national disasters, EM education and training are more critical than ever. The Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) credential—sponsored and administered by the International Association of Emergency Managers—is the highest individual professional designation in the field. Also, the Emergency Management Accreditation Program and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1600 Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs have produced EM program guidance based on leading practices.
- The Council on Accreditation in Emergency Management Education assesses higher education programs in EM. Today's academic EM programs—many are listed on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website—need to be further developed to support future needs. Suggestions for improvement are to strengthen case studies, increase opportunities for open webinars and information sharing, and foster open discussions about key content needs. This program development process could be described as a "virtuous cycle": professors ask FEMA what they should be teaching, and practitioners and providers tell FEMA about the skills required to successfully perform their key roles and tasks.
- EM has a significant and urgent need for skilled "risk analysts"—to analyze and work with communities on local problem identification/risk assessment, and then on carrying out local preparedness and mitigation projects. How will they differ in their thinking and operating style from current EM personnel? They likely will not be as hierarchical and will be more collaborative and networked. They will need to adopt a culture characterized by continuous learning and deep analytical skills supported by technology.
- The current disaster response and recovery model is "federal support, state management, and local execution." Although every "event" is local—affecting specific individuals and jurisdictions in particular ways—the disaster recovery budgets of the responding organizations are currently about 80 percent federal and 20 percent state-funded. Federal grants create and enable local EM offices to pay for programs and initiatives. By 2030, this structure may shift so that the localities have much greater responsibility for all aspects of EM, requiring state and local governments to provide a much larger proportion of the funding. This shift will be difficult for most local governments given scarce local resources. A predisaster focus can pay huge dividends as for every \$1 invested in mitigation projects, it is estimated that \$6 to \$7 is avoided in future disaster response.

- Technology allows development of new systems to meet increasing EM needs that are likely to accelerate. For example, the US Department of Agriculture developed a GIS-based media system that allows emergency response personnel on the ground to identify the different media outlets serving a particular geographic area. With this capability, the EM team can expeditiously communicate with the population in a specific geographic area about emergency conditions. In the past, identifying the broadcasting sources, if possible at all, would have been much more time consuming and haphazard, or entirely ineffective.
- Individual preparedness hinges on having the data to describe the potential problem, knowledge of how to use the data, and development of mitigation strategies. Predictive tools can significantly assist in preparedness. A question remains, however: if localities remain so dependent upon the federal government for funding, will they do the local-level analyses needed for mitigation? Fortunately, new “apps” allow local data to be collected, cleaned, and utilized at minimal cost.
- Although these readily available, inexpensive ways of communicating and of connecting systems exist, they need to be pulled together, or integrated. Sometimes the best way to do it is to use or piggy-back on existing systems. FEMA sometimes uses private sector systems to pull relevant data together for communication to be effective—and this may be more the case in the future.
- By 2030, emergency management will have transformed from a “systems” problem to a “resilience” challenge requiring more aggressive preparedness and mitigation actions. The challenge will be to prepare future EM leaders to be collaborative stewards of progress, process, and resource management. They must be able to work with others to anticipate and respond to changing needs and requirements. Risk identification, preparedness management, and mitigation will become even larger components of the emergency management discipline.









# Managing election challenges: A view from the states

## **Moderator:**

**Nancy Tate**, Co-chair, 2020 Women's Vote Centennial Initiative. Former Executive Director, League of Women Voters of the United States

## **Panelists:**

**Leslie Reynolds**, Executive Director, National Association of Secretaries of State

**Thomas Hicks**, Chair, U.S. Election Assistance Commission

**Linda Lindberg**, Director of Elections, Arlington County, Virginia

**Sean Conlin**, Principal, Strategy & Operations Consulting, Deloitte

## Background

Most Americans know about elections and candidates, but few contemplate or understand how the election system itself operates. The US election system is highly decentralized, with significant variations around the country. Elections are administered at the local level, primarily in accordance with state law and administrative policies.

To help states and localities with their voting responsibilities, the independent, bipartisan U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) was established after the 2000 election by the Help America Vote Act of 2002. Among its responsibilities, EAC develops voluntary voting system guidelines, serves as a national clearinghouse of information on election administration, certifies voting systems, and maintains the national mail voter registration form.

This session focused on how different levels of government work together to accomplish this core function of democracy and deal with new and changing security challenges.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed\*

- Unlike most advanced democracies, the United States has a decentralized electoral system. Other than providing some limited funding, the federal government has a small role that expanded somewhat with the establishment of the EAC.
- The decentralized system has important benefits. It makes the process harder for a malicious actor to disrupt since there is not one centralized system to attack or even a common system. Also, trust in government is definitively highest at the local level. Individuals recognize poll workers as their neighbors, increasing public trust levels.
- States and localities have a wide range of voting laws. For example, states have different requirements for the documents required to register and to vote; early voting such as how often and on what days; voting machines; and ballot design. Voter registration has been transformed over the past 10 years, with the overwhelming majority of states now having online registration. Similarly, the ways that citizens are voting has changed, with Oregon and Washington, for example, now voting entirely by mail. Other jurisdictions are witnessing the growing popularity of this method of voting. Some states have moved to automatic voter registration; some have same-day registration. Voters need to know the rules of their state such as poll hours and absentee ballot rules. The League of Women Voters provides state-based information on each of these issues.
- Recent years have witnessed a heightened awareness of cybersecurity threats, including hacking, breaching, trying to attack voting machines and vote tabulations, and spreading disinformation through social media. Significant improvements, however, have been made in election security. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security designated elections as critical infrastructure in 2016. States have received free cyber hygiene scans, risk and vulnerability assessments, training, and penetration tests. Tabletop exercises, based on different scenarios, have been held. It is tremendously useful to not just talk about issues, but to practice what one would do in a particular scenario.
- Celebrating its 16th anniversary in November 2018, the EAC works to provide as much election information to the local level as possible. It distributed the fiscal year 2018 Help America Vote Act funds (\$380 million) within five months of Congress's appropriation (July 2018); these funds can be spent for up to five years. The funds were distributed to states, the District of Columbia, and territories (through a population formula), with jurisdictions receiving between \$3 million and \$31 million. Since its inception, the EAC has distributed nearly \$4 billion in total. The EAC also provides support as a clearinghouse and by holding forums on election issues.
- Local governments run American elections and tend to “do a lot with a little.” Although they often are short of resources and personnel, they have a lot of resilience and always get the job done. They need to have expertise on a wide range of areas, including campaign finance and election law, voter registration, and mailing registration. They also serve as human resource managers with responsibility for recruiting poll workers and managing logistics such as getting voting equipment that works to the different polling locations. Depending on state laws, localities may be planning and running three different elections at the same time: (1) absentee/ballots by mail, (2) early voting, and (3) election day operation. It is a lot of work, but most people who work in elections get bit by the “election bug.”
- Arlington County has many high-rise buildings adjacent to the area's Metro subway stations and a somewhat older population, with only 19 percent of residents under 20 years of age. One implication of its demographics is that it does not have a lot of schools and community centers

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\*This session was broadcast live on C-SPAN and is available online at <https://www.c-span.org/video/?453926-1/election-systems-vulnerabilities>.





for polling places. The County's planning department works with real estate developers to build in conditions for polling places, including inside commercial and residential buildings. As voting by mail continues to grow in popularity, communities must consider what it will mean for current polling facilities, equipment and records warehousing, and election staffing. Arlington County has been developing a long-term strategic plan considering such issues.

- Big data (both structured and unstructured) can be utilized in election administration. AI provides a powerful set of tools that have just started to transform virtually every part of our society and can help to improve decision making. In the election context, AI can bring data from multiple silos together (voter registration across jurisdictions and death certificate data, for instance) to identify high-risk areas for humans to further examine. These tools can help identify citizens who may be at risk of disenfranchisement, as well as those ineligible or deceased, by quickly comparing voter registration rolls with obituary notices.
- Only a small number of universities around the country have a certificate program in election administration. It is important to attract passionate students into these programs and to incorporate cybersecurity into the curriculum.





# 2018 Herbert Roback Scholarship Award

## **Presenter:**

**Diane Disney**, Chair, Herbert Roback Scholarship Award Committee

## **Award recipient:**

**Suzanne Abo**, George Mason University

Herbert Roback, a highly respected public servant, encouraged talented and promising students to consider lifetime careers in the public service. To honor Mr. Roback, his family and friends established the Herbert Roback Scholarship Fund to perpetuate his work in public service. The scholarship fund is administered by the Academy of which Herbert Roback was a distinguished Fellow. This year, the Academy awarded Suzanne Abo the Herbert Roback Scholarship Award.

Suzanne Abo is currently pursuing a Master of Public Health degree at the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University. Her primary interests include public health, science diplomacy and poetry. Suzanne has served as a Peace Corp Volunteer in Benin for three years, and she is currently employed at the Office of International Science and Engineering at the National Science Foundation. Suzanne is very grateful for the support of the Schar school faculty and administration, who demonstrate dedication to public service in their academic and professional careers.



# The 2018 Louis Brownlow Book Award

## Lunch

Sponsored by: *The Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions, Arizona State University*

## Presenter:

**Edward Jennings**, Member, Louis Brownlow Book Award Committee

## Award recipients:

**Eric Patashnik**

**Alan Gerber**

**Conor Dowling**

## Lunch

President Gerton welcomed Dean Jonathan Koppell of Arizona State University (ASU) to introduce the recently established Watts College of Public Service, which has over 7,000 students pursuing degrees in public administration, social science, and related disciplines. ASU itself is an experiment in the redesign of an institution and is contributing to public administration as it takes on improving higher education.

As a university, ASU assesses itself by who it includes, not who it excludes. Most ASU students are the first in their families to attend college and have a family income around \$50,000. It is unique among higher education in taking responsibility for educating the full population of the state. ASU accepts any student who can do college-level work and is now among the largest American universities by enrollment. ASU has shown that it is possible to be a high-quality university while caring for the welfare of the student body. Among other accomplishments, it is now among the top 20 universities in the world in patent production.

The Watts College of Public Service is named in honor of a \$30 million investment from Mike and Cindy Watts. The Watts grew up in Phoenix and wanted to improve the community by investing in the power of public service. They believe in the power of students, faculty, and partnerships with nonprofits and governments, and they want to address the glaring lack of confidence in public institutions and public service itself. Their powerful investment will allow ASU to address real problems on a community-to-community basis. ASU has also been working to improve police trust in communities, end human trafficking, and increase the ability to manage resources in creative and efficient ways.

As the Academy launches its Grand Challenges campaign, these issues merit careful consideration. ASU can serve as a case study—if it can transform from a good regional university into a top-echelon university while serving more students, government itself can surely be made to work more effectively and help solve the most difficult problems.

## 2018 Louis Brownlow Book Award

The Academy has recognized outstanding contributions to the literature of public administration through presentation of the Louis Brownlow Book Award since 1968. The award recognizes outstanding contributions on topics of wide contemporary interest to practitioners and scholars in the field of public administration. Awardees provide new insights, fresh analysis, and original ideas that contribute to the understanding of the role of governmental institutions and how they can most effectively serve the public.

Edward Jennings awarded the 2018 Brownlow Book Award to Eric Patashnik, Alan Gerber, and Conor Dowling for *Unhealthy Politics: The Battle over Evidence-Based Medicine*. The authors posited that, while the U.S. medical system is touted as the most advanced in the world, many common treatments are not based on sound science. Treatments can go into widespread use before they are rigorously evaluated, and every year patients are harmed because they receive too many medical procedures—and too few treatments that really work. The book sheds new light on why the government's response to this troubling situation has been inadequate, and why efforts to improve the evidence base of U.S. medicine continue to cause so much political controversy and public trepidation.

The authors draw on public opinion surveys, physician surveys, case studies, and political science models to explain how political incentives, polarization, and the misuse of professional authority have undermined efforts to address the medical evidence problem and curb ineffective treatment and wasteful spending. They paint a portrait of a medical industry with vast influence over which procedures and treatments get adopted, and a public burdened by the rising costs of healthcare yet fearful of going against "doctor's orders." The book shows how the government's efforts to promote evidence-based medicine have become mired in partisan debates. It also proposes sensible solutions that can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our healthcare.

*Unhealthy Politics* offers vital insights not only into health policy but also into the limits of science, expertise, and professionalism as political foundations for pragmatic problem solving in American democracy. The book contains many insights into evidence-based thinking and incorporates technical knowledge, administration, and politics that apply to public management.





# Civil service reform at 40

**Hosted by:** The Standing Panel on The Public Service

**Moderator:**

**Alan Balutis**, Senior Director and Distinguished Fellow, Cisco Systems, Inc.

**Panelists:**

**Reginald Wells**, Executive-in-Residence, American University

**Nicole Ogrysko**, Reporter, Federal News Radio

**Shawn Skelly**, Commissioner, National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service



## Background

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed the Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA), which made numerous statutory revisions, including the creation of the Senior Executive Service (SES). Now, 40 years later, what needs to be done to create a 21st century civil service?

The CSRA was a very significant advancement driven by the President of the United States in conjunction with the rest of the Executive Branch, the Congress, employee unions, and the public. The CSRA was never designed to be static. It established the merit principles and prohibited personnel practices on which federal employment is based, but it was expected to evolve over time with the changing nature of work. The federal government's personnel positions and work requirements have changed greatly over the past four decades. Clerical federal positions have virtually disappeared and have been replaced with new occupations such as data scientists and cybersecurity specialists. The Office of Personnel Management was designed to be the central personnel entity. Its role and responsibilities are subject to considerable debate and revision today.

The Panel discussed civil service reform and the need to address the government's most important asset—its people.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed

- Human resource professionals rarely receive the leadership support required for their critical role in the organization. They work with antiquated legislation and old tools and often without the cooperation of hiring managers.
  - In order to transform the federal civil service, Chief Human Capital Officers must have a direct line to top leaders within federal departments and agencies. In the private sector, the Chief of Talent is viewed as a critical position with a direct line to the Chief Executive Officer.
  - The only elements of the CSRA of 1978 that must be kept intact are the merit system principles and merit-based hiring practices. In particular, the federal pay and classification system should be reformed, as the vast majority of today's employees are paid using a system from 1949, when the work they performed was more clerical in nature.
  - The key to attracting and retaining the next generation of civil servants is to tap into their intrinsic motivation. Individuals are attracted to federal service primarily because of their agency's mission. Agency leaders and supervisors must capitalize on this enormous asset, while working to eliminate employee bashing that has far too long been a routine part of the political landscape.
  - University students are overwhelmingly public service oriented. Although they are extremely capable and talented, the federal government fails to engage them, and hiring processes are cumbersome. Many students default to programs like AmeriCorps, the Peace Corps, nonprofit organizations, and other such opportunities. The federal government needs to make greater use of these opportunities to bring these individuals into career civil service jobs. Additionally, it should consider implementing programs similar to that of AmeriCorps and Peace Corps to expedite entry into public service for highly motivated Americans.
- Today's civil servants do more with less; yet their work often is not highlighted or supported. Part of the problem is a failure of the federal government to clearly and convincingly communicate what it does for the public.
  - Many contend that we have too many federal employees, but soon, if not already, the problem may become not having enough staff with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities.
  - One size does not fit all. Each federal agency has a unique mission. Although there may be some overlap, many believe it is unreasonable to expect all agencies to operate with the same human capital system.



# Building social equity into policy and practice

**Hosted by:** The Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance

**Moderator:**

**Gary Glickman**, Chair, Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance

**Panelists:**

**Nancy Navarro**, Councilmember, District 4, Montgomery County, MD

**Nichole Dunn**, Vice President of Innovation and Community Impact, Results for America

**Mary Garvey**, Director of Innovation and Inclusion, Institute for Child Success

## Background

In a society characterized by increasing disparities and polarization, social equity has become one of the most important challenges facing governmental leaders today. Achieving social equity can only happen with the conscious and continuous efforts of leaders throughout government at all levels. While proactive legislation at the federal and state level can help alleviate inequities, deliberative policies and practices at the local level are needed to drive results in communities around the country. The panel explored how to build social equity into public policy and practice.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed

- Words matter. It matters how you frame equity programs and investments. Government needs to clearly connect the dots between equity and citizens' everyday lives. Decision-makers should consider social equity as an infrastructure investment and focus on the costs of inequity. Inequity has direct and indirect costs for which all citizens will eventually pay.
- Structural changes are necessary to address questions of equity. Today's conversations about social equity are not that different from those of 20 years ago. Unfortunately, these conversations have not resulted in large-scale changes in program design and strategic investments. Shifting the paradigm is an economic imperative that requires legislative change and concerted administrative action.
- The Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL) Program is a comprehensive solution school districts use to design, deliver and measure evidence-based summer and research-based afterschool learning experiences. BELL empowers educators and builds the capacity to accelerate academic and social impact more broadly and more effectively. Included are smart tools, strategies, and real-time support so school districts can build and replicate programs with fidelity. BELL has been refined and replicated in classrooms across the U.S. for over 25 years.
- Maryland has created the Children's Opportunity Fund (COF) to leverage private investment to help prevent the "summer slide." The program is funded jointly by the government of Montgomery County, Maryland and

Montgomery County Public Schools to leverage public funds to attract private investment that can fund strategic investments that improve the lives of low-income children and families in the county. With a focus on innovative, evidence-informed efforts targeted at closing the opportunity gap, the COF identifies priority areas for investment based on unmet need, aligns resources toward effective multisector collaborations serving the county's most vulnerable youth and their families, and seeks new funding sources.

- Equality Indicators—developed by the CUNY (City University of New York) Institute for State and Local Governance (ISLG) and funded by The Rockefeller Foundation—are a set of indicators in a variety of important areas that “helps cities understand and measure equality or equity in their city. It works across multiple areas (such as education, housing, justice) and measures the disparities faced by disadvantaged groups (those most vulnerable to inequality, such as racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, or individuals living in poverty) across those domains on an annual basis to track change over time. These indicators can be used as frameworks to support policy development, demonstrating the effectiveness of current policies and initiatives, and highlighting areas where new policies and initiatives may be needed. By making data publicly available, they increase transparency and accountability, allowing the local community an inside view into the disparities in their city and where progress is—and is not—being made.” The program works with local leaders to identify the best equality indicators for local circumstances. Although there are other potential ways to benchmark cities, the ISLG indicators serve the important purpose of allowing cities to measure their programs' effects on equity over time.
- Program evaluation and measurement is helpful, but decisions about funding are typically disconnected from evidence of what works. Storytelling can be a useful change agent. When decisions are not evidence-based, communities who would benefit most from moving funding to more effective programs can be mobilized through compelling narratives.



# Public administration challenges

## Amidst the economic impacts and political side effects in Asia of the current trade disputes

**Hosted by:** The Standing Panel on International Affairs

**Moderator:**

**Arnold Fields**, Chair, Standing Panel on International Affairs; Member, Academy Board of Directors

**Panelists:**

**Matthew Mingus**, School of Public Affairs and Administration, Western Michigan University

**Seungnam Lee**, Economic Officer and 2nd Secretary of the Korean Embassy, Embassy of the Republic of Korea

**Marc Mealy**, Vice President-Policy, US-ASEAN Business Council

**Nguyen Dang Trung**, Chief, Economic Section, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

**Irving Williamson**, Commissioner, United States International Trade Commission



## Background

International trade is a sensitive issue for countries, and even small shifts can have huge impacts on the market and the relationship between trading partners. The United States has been seeking to address unfair trade practices with its trading partners. For example, President Trump has imposed large-scale and wide-ranging tariffs on imports from China, which has reciprocated with its own tariffs on American exports to China.

The United States has also been renegotiating trade deals and carving out new relationships with East Asian partners like South Korea and Vietnam, which has been focused on reinforcing its market resilience and diversifying its markets. The trade conflict between the United States and China has further incentivized these nations into trade deals that exclude the United States, like the forthcoming Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). At the same time, East Asian nations also remain committed to maintaining their trade relationships with the United States and the West, at large, in the face of the changing trade environment. The panelists explored these issues.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed

- International trade is critical to modern American life. The U.S. trade deficit, which totaled about \$600 billion in the 12 months ending October 2018, together with what he sees as an unfair playing field for the United States, has made trade fairness a priority of Present Trump.
- Some nations are more reliant upon or desiring of American goods, and they will face more pressure to open their markets to those goods. Transparency and equity, key principles of public administration, are likewise important elements of international trade differences.
- Most Americans may not understand how U.S. trade policy operates or how it impacts their lives. But they feel its effects through the wide range of imported products, such as automobiles, electronics, and other commonplace items, and the lower prices they pay for these imports. Other concerns center around the loss of American jobs in certain industries and perceptions that the United States has not been treated equitably by at least some of its trading partners. For example, about two-thirds of the U.S. trade deficit is with China.
- Billions of dollars in trade flow between East Asia and the United States every year. Tariffs and trade uncertainty have impacted all of East Asia through reduced investment, disrupted supply chains, and lowered production.
- East Asian nations are now more inclined to pursue regional and transcontinental trade deals, and to pursue liberalization instead of protectionism in response to American tariff actions. Agreements such as the ASEAN-HK (Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Hong Kong) Free Trade and Related Investment Agreement, the EU (European Union)-Singapore Agreement, and CPTPP promise to change the landscape even further.
- As East Asian nations seek liberalization in trade with other parties beyond the United States, small-and medium-sized U.S. exporters are more likely to feel any negative impact.
- East Asian countries are also concerned about the possibility of having to choose between being “friends” with the United States or China. They are investing more in their own armed forces and exploring regional military alliances to help protect their sovereignty.
- New technological developments and innovations further complicate the situation as additional market disruptors emerge.
- Closely behind China, the second and third largest exporters to the United States are Canada and Mexico. In November 2018, the United States, Canada, Mexico affirmed a new regional trade agreement replacing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The new trade agreement awaits congressional approval.



# Women in public administration: Numbers and reality

## **Women in NAPA and the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)**

**Marilyn Rubin**, Distinguished Research Fellow, School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers-Newark

## **Global Women's Leadership Initiative Index**

**Gwen Young**, Director of the Wilson Center Global Women's Leadership Initiative

## **Personalizing the numbers: A woman's perspective on being a public administrator**

**Paula Stern**, Founder & Chairwoman, The Stern Group, Inc. Former Chairwoman, the U.S. International Trade Commission

## **Moderator:**

**Mary Ellen Guy**, Professor, School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado-Denver

## Background

This session examined the status of women in public service; in the 900-member NAPA, with Fellows elected based on their distinguished contributions to the field; and the ASPA, with its diverse membership of 8,000 practitioners, academicians, and students linking theory and practice within the field of public administration. A lot has changed over the past 125 years. In 1893, New Zealand became the first country to allow women to vote. Other countries followed suit in the 20th Century, with Australia being the second country to do so in 1902. Women were first able to vote in U.S. national elections in 1920, and the 202 Women's Vote Centennial Initiative is working to tell the story of how women achieved this vitally important right in America. From 1940 to 2016, there were 147 women worldwide who served as head of state or head of government.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed

- The percentage of women in government leadership positions has grown by 20 percent worldwide between 1945 and 2018. Still, Rwanda and Bolivia are the only two countries in which women held 50 percent or more of lower/single house parliament seats. In 147 of 193 countries, women accounted for fewer than 30 percent of lower/single house parliamentarians. And, at the local level in the United States, over 95 percent of mayors are male.
- Women have become a larger proportion of the membership in ASPA and NAPA. Although only two women were among the 55 charter members of ASPA, women represented 50 percent of the organization's members in 2018. About 40 percent of the newly elected Fellows at the Academy in 2018 were female. This reflects the increasing role of women in the field of public administration.
- The Women in Public Service project was established to accelerate women's participation in policy and political leadership and to create more dynamic and inclusive institutions that leverage the full potential of the world's population to change the way global solutions are forged. The project's goal is for women to hold 50 percent of leadership positions worldwide by 2050.
- The project works through research, partnerships, and peer-to-peer networking. It drives transparency across institutions, gathers and shares information and evidence that drives change, and builds networks and inspires and empowers women leaders.
- It has built a data platform (covering 195 countries and territories) that tracks where women are in government through an index that measures participation in leadership across the various levels of government.
- The world has a long way to go to achieve the project's goals, as just 23 countries currently have gender parity.
- Younger women today see the world differently than earlier generations. Despite significant progress on women's rights, young women are still facing sexual harassment and are still facing the same harmful biases and cultural norms. "Gender straightjackets" are a form of ideology that creates a binary approach between male and female. It is in our cultural liturgy that men are to rise up to leadership and women are to follow; these norms continue to drive behavioral expectations. Because female experiences vary greatly by vocation, it is important to pay attention to differences across vocations in order to understand their causes and consequences.
- Female experiences vary greatly by vocation; different motivators and motivations. It is important to pay attention to differences across vocations.
- There is a very active group called Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL). Only 13 percent of city managers are women, and ELGL is working to grow that number. Also, e.Republic's Governing Institute has an initiative called Women in Government focused on recruiting women to government and providing guidance on government leadership. This is an important issue, as women continue to face hurdles even as much progress has been made.



# Minnowbrook at 50: Reflections on the field of public administration

## Moderator:

**Tina Nabatchi**, Associate Professor, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University

## Panelists:

**Robert Bifulco**, Associate Dean and Chair, Department of Public Administration and International Affairs, The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University

**Susan Gooden**, Interim Dean and Professor, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, Virginia Commonwealth University

**David Van Slyke**, Dean and Louis A. Bantle Chair in Business-Government Policy, The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University



## Background

In 1968, Dwight Waldo organized a conference of scholars who set out to revolutionize the field of public administration and highlight the importance of the administrative state for democracy. The conference, now known as Minnowbrook I, is widely recognized as a watershed moment that launched the New Public Administration movement emphasizing citizenship and public service.

In the summer of 2018, the Maxwell School celebrated the 50th anniversary of Minnowbrook by gathering a diverse group of scholars and practitioners to consider the state of public administration five decades later. New and old themes emerged in both the small group sessions and full group plenary sessions. There were 46 participants, who covered seven topics: (1) public administration, public values, and democracy; (2) social equity in public administration; (3) international and comparative perspectives in public administration; (4) analytic frameworks for micro-, macro-, meso-level public administration; (5) relevance of the field; (6) integration of public administration scholarship with practice and across disciplines; and (7) new and emerging technologies.

The organizers wanted to be as inclusive as possible to find a balance of participants. Participants were evenly split between men and women of various races who were both practitioners and academics. Participants each wrote a concept paper on what they felt was missing from the field. Those papers were used for affinity diagramming.

## Key insights presented and issues discussed

- Public administration should be viewed as an integrative field. It is a small, relatively young discipline, and its strength lies in being the bridge builder, the collaborator responsible for seeing the big picture and integrating the full range of disciplines and interests.
- Public agencies and career civil servants are no longer the center of gravity in the field of public administration. Nongovernmental organizations such as nonprofit organizations and contractors are playing an increasingly critical role in governance.
- Universities can play an important role. The question is how to create a culture within the academic community at large to conduct scholarship on the major practical challenges facing government.
- Some of the Minnowbrook 50 conference participants believed that other issues—not just the seven topics framing the meeting—should be a significant focus of the field. For example, the rule of law, with an emphasis on the role of the Constitution on public administration, is an

important foundational topic. Some participants believe the field should focus more on normative scholarship and take a stand on policy issues. Others did not believe that this was the job of academics, stating that their job is to conduct objective, scientific research.

- Economists and business professionals are major voices on the nation's television screens and airwaves; public administrators are not. Is this partly because we are not teaching the right things in public administration programs? The curriculum should be expanded to include additional philosophy and legal courses, along with courses on specific topics such as climate change and refugee crises.
- In the United States, there are far fewer individuals with Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degrees than with Masters in Public Administration or Public Policy. About 200,000 MBAs are awarded annually compared to about 17,000 in public administration. Many with public management degrees work at for-profit and nonprofit organizations, partly because these organizations help deliver important public services, but also because of the federal government's broken hiring process. It is important to develop a pipeline of talent into government at all levels. This requires personnel management processes that are agile and responsive to government agency needs and the expectations of highly-qualified candidates seeking a career in public service.
- Social equity has long been a concern of Minnowbrook and the public administration community. The Academy explicitly acknowledged social equity as the fourth pillar of public administration in the 1990s. The goal of social equity is to eliminate inequities, both structural and institutional. Additional research on social equity, including effective strategies, key performance measures, and benchmarks, is needed.
- New issues discussed at Minnowbrook 50 were emerging technologies, AI, big data, and how they shape both scholarship and practice in public administration. Technology has always been present in some way, but it was treated as a siloed input. Now it is integrated into the public administration field and raising significant ethical issues, such as potential biases introduced into machine learning. Ultimately, there was a sense that the Minnowbrook 50 participants were talking about issues in ways that have far greater consequences than in the past.



# Elmer B. Staats Lecture

**Moderator:**

**Danny Werfel**, Partner and Managing Director, The Boston Consulting Group

**Panelists:**

**Beth Cobert**, Chief Executive Officer, Skillful Initiative, Markle Foundation

**Jen Pahlka**, Executive Director, Code for America

## Background

This year's Elmer B. Staats lecture took the form of a panel discussion on the future of work and how rapidly evolving technology is changing the norms and practices around jobs in both the private and public sectors. The panelists also discussed the government's role in addressing this broad challenge through policy and practice.

Moderator Danny Werfel and panelists Beth Cobert, and Jen Pahlka—all White House alumnae and Academy Fellows currently in the private sector—discussed the ever-changing labor landscape and how new software and hardware innovations and applications are creating fundamental changes in the way jobs are performed and who is doing them.

- Danny Werfel, currently head of the Public Sector practice in North America at The Boston Consulting Group (BCG), focuses on all aspects of organizational change, including human capital, risk management, IT modernization, and business process improvements. Prior to joining BCG, Werfel was selected by President Obama and Treasury Secretary Lew to serve as Acting Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. Earlier, Werfel served as the Controller of the Office Federal Financial Management at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- Beth Cobert is the CEO of Skillful, a Markle Foundation initiative to create a skills-based labor market that empowers all Americans to succeed in the digital economy. Previously, Cobert served as Acting Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) under President Obama. She came to OPM from OMB, where she served as the Deputy Director for Management and the U.S. Chief Performance Officer starting in October 2013. Before joining the federal government, Cobert worked for nearly 30 years at McKinsey & Company as a Senior Partner in their New York and San Francisco offices, where she served clients across a range of sectors, including financial services, healthcare, real estate, telecommunications, and philanthropy.
- Jennifer Pahlka is the founder and executive director of Code for America. She recently served as the U.S. Deputy Chief Technology Officer in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, where she architected and helped found the United States Digital Service. She spent eight years at CMP Media, where she ran the Game Developers Conference, Game Developer magazine, Gamasutra.com, and the Independent Games Festival. Previously, she ran the Web 2.0 and Gov 2.0 events for TechWeb, in conjunction with O'Reilly Media.

## Key Takeaways

- Paradigm shifts in the way work is done are happening already, and they will only increase in frequency and magnitude. All stakeholders must prepare for this new future. Not only are individual jobs changing, but work itself is evolving in unprecedented ways.
- Technology dictates trends, and vice versa. As technology develops, the way work is done will shift along with it. The rise of the so-called “gig economy,” and the reality that a middle-class standard of living may be achievable by short-term opportunities, instead of long-term jobs and careers are fundamental to universal changes to hiring and organizational structures.
- Policymakers must account for the incidental effects of these new technologies and trends. Labor market shifts, autonomous technologies, and simplified workflows will change the way people work and how they live. Being slow to adapt can create problems for all stakeholders.
- There is a great amount of optimism about forthcoming technologies and the jobs they may bring; but we must be cautious in how we proceed, as these new technologies will undoubtedly create significant disruption.
- Expanded opportunities for education and experience necessitate a more flexible job search and employment framework for workers.
- Technology disruptors that have contributed to changing the market may well create further disruption, including to themselves. The example of Uber was presented because if the company can acquire self-driving cars, its business model fundamentally changes.
- The question of government intervention in some of these disruptive events was raised. Can the government even prevent something like self-driving cars? If so, why? The benefits of self-driving can help millions, but it will displace workers. How can government help those who become displaced? If we can predict coming changes, government in partnership with the private sector can help prepare the workforce for them.
- Soft skills will become more critical value adds for low-skill or augmented skill positions, as technological aids reduce those positions' dependency on proprietary training.
- Policy change will be occurring in a complex ecosystem, and the government must become delivery-driven to keep pace. These policies must be based off of real-time data, not years-old estimates, and be suited towards users' needs.

- Formal education must also adapt to suit the new landscape, to take the burden of retraining off of the employer.
- There inevitably will be some negative effects from the transition to new models and technologies. A good job will not necessarily be a high paying one. Even as profits and efficiency improve, organizations (both public and private sector) may not expand staff or benefits. Consequently, the social safety net should be reinforced to address these challenges and ensure that innovation is able to continue.
- While expanded vocational education and alternatives to college are important, they are not the only solution. The need for advanced and continuing education will persist throughout an individual's life and must be accessible and affordable to maintain his or her economic competitiveness.
- Policymakers and leaders must think globally to draw ideas and inspiration from how other countries are tackling these issues, and learn effective practices for implementation. Innovations are occurring at the state and local levels, and are just as important as those at the federal level.







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PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Donald Kato

Joshua L.

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# James E. Webb Lecture

**Lecturer:**

**Frank Weil**, Chairman, The Intersector Project



## Background

Frank Weil, Chairman of The Intersector Project, discussed how public administration can evolve to be a more efficient initiator of intersector governance. Weil has had a distinguished career in government, investment management, investment banking, and law. His public service includes work at both the federal and state levels. For the State of New York, he served as Chair of the Committee on Taxation of its Economic Development Board from 1975 to 1977 and as Chair of its Board of Equalization and Assessment from 1976 to 1977. In the federal government, he served as head of the International Trade Administration in the U.S. Department of Commerce from 1977 to 1979. He also served on the Boards of Directors of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the Center for National Policy, and Council for Excellence in Government.

## Key Takeaways

- Weil's public, private, and nonprofit experiences have led him to strongly believe that no one sector can address all of society's needs. This requires navigating across the government, business, and nonprofit sectors.
- Each sector has both unique limitations and unique assets. If they work together toward a common purpose by sharing expertise, resources, and authority, they can accomplish far more than each can alone.
- It is important to distinguish *government* from *governance*. Many people blame government for a failure to solve complex problems, but most contemporary issues require the assets and strengths of the multiple sectors: government, business, and the nonprofit sector. Those three basic sectors make up virtually all of modern society. Government would benefit from being more effective stewards of intersector governance. Problem solving is not all about government; it is all about governance.
- Policy and process are both important. Policy is what one wants to happen; and process is how to make it happen. The "policy or process" issue can be addressed when examining a host of modern problems such as immigration, climate change, human trafficking, and so on. On any given issue, these problems describe a policy goal, but they are also totally reliant on a solid process of awareness and actions to gain traction towards their goal. A process without a clear policy focus and goal likely will spin wheels and accomplish little. Similarly, a clear policy to stimulate economic growth, without a clear and carefully directed process is also unlikely to be effective.
- Intersector governance is a public issue. Focus groups on the topic revealed that citizens are attracted to an intersector approach when introduced to it—citizens, however, do not proactively demand it. The media and elected officials have a more prominent role to play in educating the public on this approach.
- Key questions include:
  - How can we demonstrate the economic benefits of effective intersector governance? This would help all parties and the public understand the necessary conditions to invest in collaborative approaches and what to avoid.
  - How do we create systemic processes within public administration to more effectively diagnose the right opportunities for intersectoral approaches? There can be an understandable fear within government of entering into a bad agreement. Diagnostic processes and training to identify opportunities have an important role in making it easier for federal, state, and local governments to identify and then pursue the right opportunities.
- The Intersector Project was created to illuminate and propagate intersector collaboration and governance. The intersector process draws attention to the reality that good processes are essential to effective public problem-solving and that good policy comes from good process.
- Business, public nonprofit organizations, and government, with input from the public, have critical roles in solving such complex public policy challenges, such as cybersecurity and climate change. Effective solutions to these problems require that the three sectors work hand-in-glove, or intersect, by sharing authority, expertise, and resources. Fortunately, the topic of multisector collaborative governance seems to be garnering additional attention among educators, practitioners, and students.
- An important consideration for the public administration field is to ensure future generations of public administrators are educated on governance and governing, not just government. Adjusting the names of public administration schools to include or focus on governance (for example, the school of public policy and governance) is an important signaling device. This is consistent with a recent New York Times interview with Paul Volcker, who noted that we need people in government equipped with more than policy analysis skills.



# George Graham Award for Exceptional Service to the Academy

**Presenter:**

**Sylvester Murray**, Chair, The George Graham Award Committee; Distinguished Visiting Professor, Jackson State University, Mississippi

**Award recipient:**

**Mortimer Downey III**



## Background

Dr. Murray presented the *2018 George Graham Award for Exceptional Service to the Academy* to Fellow Mortimer L. Downey III. During his illustrious career in public service, Mr. Downey has been the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and Principal Director and First Vice Chair of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Downey's service to the Academy has ranged from Standing Panels to the Board of Directors, with an outstanding record on project Panels, forums, and special committees. He has enriched the Fellowship as a forum speaker at numerous events. He has always been a regular attendee at awards ceremonies, virtually every annual meeting since his induction in 1994, and special events.

A highlight of Mort's engagement with the Academy includes the large number of project Panels on which he has served:

- Department of Homeland Security Steering Committee
- Transforming the Public Service: Progress Made and Work Ahead
- FBI Transformation Sub-Panel
- Intergovernmental Forum on Transportation Finance (Chair)
- GAO Comptroller General Compensation
- NOAA Climate Service
- Prioritizing America's Water Resource Investments: Budget Reforms for Civil Works Construction Projects at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Vice Chair)
- Forecast for the Future: Assuring the Capacity of the National Weather Service (Chair)
- Maritime Administration Evaluation.

Taken together, these activities reflect an extraordinary commitment to the Academy's principles. Downey has participated in significant activities each year that he has been a Fellow, sometimes out front but even more often behind the scenes. Regardless of his role, his participation has entailed intellectual rigor, a firm belief in sound governance, and a dedication to collaboration with rigor. Mort Downey exemplifies the principles on which the Academy was founded and is more than worthy of being named this year's George Graham Award recipient.

In his remarks, Downey noted that he has benefited greatly from his 24 years as a Fellow. As government and society have changed over this time, the Academy has always been a resource to think about what is important in government and governance. While serving as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, he was able to consult with Fellows such as Dwight Ink and Alan Dean who were involved when the department was created. They and other Academy Fellows were always willing to provide advice, including on the key topic of how to develop a performance-based department at a time when the notion of metrics for government was new. After leaving government, Mort felt that his connection with the Academy was, in effect, his connection back to what was happening in government. He encouraged Fellows to serve on project Panels. The ability to help government agencies address their challenges is an enormous opportunity to contribute to good government and one of the central reasons that the Academy was chartered by Congress.

# 2018 Fellows Inducted into the National Academy of Public Administration

**Roland Anglin**

Professor and Dean, Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University

**Robert Bifulco**

Associate Dean, Chair and Professor, Department of Public Administration and International Affairs, Syracuse University

**Hector Cordero-Guzman**

Professor, Marx School of Public and International Affairs, Baruch College of the City University of New York

**Elaine Duke**

Principal, Elaine Duke and Associates

**Ron Feldman**

Chief Operating Officer, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

**Greg Giddens**

Partner, Potomac Ridge Consulting, LLC

**James Hendler**

Tetherless World Professor of Computer, Web and Cognitive Sciences Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

**Deborah Lucas**

Director, Golub Center for Finance and Policy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**Charles Menifield**

Dean, School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University

**Christopher Ansell**

Chair, Department of Political Science, University of California, Berkeley

**David Brunori**

Research Professor, The George Washington University

**Lisa Danzig**

Specialist Leader, Human Capital, Organizational Talent & Transformation, Deloitte Consulting LLP

**Michael Ettlinger**

Director, Casey School of Public Policy, University of New Hampshire

**Jay Fisette**

Former Board Member/Chairman, Arlington County, Virginia

**Thelma Hite Harris**

President and CEO, Hite Consulting, Inc.

**Robert Lightfoot**

President, LSINC

**Katie Malague**

Vice President for Government Effectiveness, Partnership for Public Service

**Ines Mergel**

Professor of Public Administration, Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Konstanz, Germany

**Donald Bathurst**

Executive Director, Emergency Preparedness, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**Matthew Chase**

Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Counties

**Leisha Dehart-Davis**

Professor of Public Administration and Government, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

**Lee Feldman**

City Manager, City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida

**Mridul Gautam**

Vice President, Research and Innovation, University of Nevada, Reno

**Wendy Haynes**

Special Assistant to the Vice President for Grants and Advancement Initiatives, University Advancement Division, Bridgewater State University

**Christopher P. Lu**

Senior Strategy Advisor, Fiscal Note

**Justin Marlowe**

Professor of Public Finance and Civic Engagement, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Washington

**Kathleen Miller**

Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

**Christopher Paul Morrill**

Executive Director/CEO, Government Finance Officers Association of the United States & Canada

**Courtney Phillips**

Chief Executive Officer, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

**Sean Stackley**

Vice President, Strategy, L3 Technologies

**Janine Velasco**

Assistant Director, Business and Management Operations, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

**Peter Winokur**

Founder and President, Integrated Safety Solution, LLC

**Joseph Nimmich**

Senior Executive Advisor, Civil and Commercial Group, Booz Allen Hamilton

**Maureen Pirog**

Rudy Professor of Policy Analysis, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University

**Kurt Thurmaier**

Professor and Chair, Department of Public Administration, School of Public and Global Affairs, Northern Illinois University

**James Williams**

Partner, Schambach and Williams Consulting

**John Paczkowski**

Senior Vice President, Homeland Security and National Resilience, ICF International

**Erika Poethig**

Vice President and Chief Innovation Officer, Research to Action Lab, The Urban Institute

**Eugenia Toma**

Wendell H. Ford Professor of Public Policy and Administration, Martin School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Kentucky

**Orice Williams Brown**

Managing Director, Congressional Relations, U.S. Government Accountability Office

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The Academy is an independent, nonprofit, and nonpartisan organization established in 1967 and chartered by Congress in 1984. It provides expert advice to government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. To carry out this mission, the Academy draws on the knowledge and experience of its approximately 850 Fellows—including former cabinet officers, members of Congress, governors, mayors, and state legislators, as well as career public administrators, scholars, and business executives. The Academy helps public institutions address their most critical governance and management challenges through in-depth studies and analyses, advisory services and technical assistance, Congressional testimony, forums and conferences, and stakeholder engagement. For more information, visit [www.napawash.org](http://www.napawash.org).



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