



Villanova University

Date: June 3, 2015

To: David Goroff, Career Services, ICMA

From: Craig Wheeland, Ph.D.
Chapter Advisor, ICMA Student Chapter

Subject: Annual Report 2014-2015

During Academic Year 2014-2015, we enrolled 15 MPA students as members our chapter.

E. J. Mentry, MPA student, served as Chapter President.

Bruce Clark, Township Manager, Middletown, PA continued as the Chapter Mentor

I'm proud to report that our chapter won the 2015 ICMA student chapter video competition. The winning video was named "Interns" and uses Lorde's music to her song Royals along with lyrics written by our students and performed by our students.

In the Fall Semester 2014 the chapter members were invited to attend the one-day regional workshop held by the Association for Pennsylvania Municipal Management on October 17. Villanova's Department of Public Administration paid the workshop fee for each student. The workshop included a luncheon. We had six chapter members participate. There were about 50 municipal managers from around southeastern PA attending the workshop as well.

The Spring 2014 event was a Innovation Lab held in order to think creatively about recruiting the next generation of local government managers. Following the ideas expressed by management consultant Frans Johansson in his talk to ICMA about "the Medici Effect", we brought together a mix of undergraduate students who were completing PA 1050 Public Administration, graduate students who were completing MPA 8500 Effective City Management, MPA faculty, and four township managers. By having a mix of attendees with different perspectives and varying amounts of knowledge about local government management, we hope to stimulate a creative exchange of ideas. Our guided discussion lasted about one hour. Our product is this report to APMM's Next Generation Committee. Villanova's Department of Public Administration will also rely on the report to influence programming for our undergraduate students and graduate students. See the report in Appendix A.

Appendix A: Innovation Lab Report

Date: May 7, 2015

To: Mr. Rick Mellor
Township Manager, Whitemarsh Township, PA
Chair, APMM's Next Generation Committee

From: Craig Wheeland, Ph.D.
Professor of Public Administration and
ICMA Student Chapter Advisor

Subject: Villanova Student ICMA Chapter's
Innovation Lab – April 30, 2015

Overview

Villanova's ICMA Student Chapter hosted an Innovation Lab in order to think creatively about recruiting the next generation of local government managers. Following the ideas expressed by management consultant Frans Johansson in his talk to ICMA about "the Medici Effect", we brought together a mix of undergraduate students who were completing PA 1050 Public Administration, graduate students who were completing MPA 8500 Effective City Management, MPA faculty, and four township managers. By having a mix of attendees with different perspectives and varying amounts of knowledge about local government management, we hope to stimulate a creative exchange of ideas. Our guided discussion lasted about one hour. Our product is this report to APMM's Next Generation Committee. Villanova's Department of Public Administration will also rely on the report to influence programming for our undergraduate students and graduate students.

The Context

Data from ICMA surveys document the "graying" of the local government management profession. For example, in the early 1970s, 31% of managers were under age 40 and 22% were over age 50. In 2012, only 11% of managers were under age 40 and 60% were over age 50. In 2003, ICMA published a report on *Preparing the Next Generation*. The report provides excellent ideas for understanding the challenge of recruiting young professionals into local government management as well as identifying specific actions that can lead to effective recruitment. During our Innovation Lab we talked about ideas from the report, explored their continued relevance and identified actions that could help recruit graduating seniors and MPA students into the profession.

Highlights from the Innovation Lab

1. What are students looking for in the job market when they graduate?

- Security that they will have a job after graduation
- They want to love what you do
- They want to engage in meaningful/impactful work
- They want an opportunity for advancement
- They want a diversity of work experiences so they develop various skills

What do municipal manager's experience?

- Time moves fast! Because the work varies and is interesting
- Work offers the chance to use skills for the public good – and not for profit
- Important work that helps solve community problems
- Advancement opportunities? Yes! By moving to another municipality you can gain more/different responsibilities and also higher compensation
- Job security... not so much- although the large majority of managers choose to change jobs rather than be fired or forced out
- "...making our little part of the world better" is perhaps the greatest motivation to do the job

3. Obstacles to recruiting recent graduates

- The "accidental" profession – no single/clear path to the manager's chair – for example, what are the entry-level professional jobs that could be stepping stones to appointment as a manager?
- Lack of awareness of the profession and of local government in undergraduate education
- Lack of visibility of the manager in many communities, so not a well-known position
- Gender gap – so few women managers to act as mentors
- Negative impression of the government generally – and dislike of partisan/ideological politics – so anything having to do with elected officials and government is a problem
- Sometimes difficult to have a "balanced" life as a result of the long days and evening hours management positions usually require
- Need for branding – how can we "think like Millennials?" Is ICMA's *Life, Well Run* campaign impacting undergraduates and 23 to 30 year old graduate students?

Ideas

- Increase knowledge of local government contributions to community life and awareness of the profession of local government management
 - Introduce municipal management and local government in high school curricula, perhaps by visiting classes or creating a program for students to serve as "officials for a day"
 - Introduce municipal management and local government to undergraduates by regularly offering courses on these topics and using short-term, course-based assignments or projects to help a local government address a need

- Bring graduate students to professional training, such as when the ICMA Student chapter members attended the Fall 2014 APMM Workshop at Upper Merion Township
- Increase volunteer and internship opportunities with local government so undergraduates (especially seniors) and graduate students gain first-hand experience and see that non-profit organizations are not the only way to improve community life/the common good, so perhaps change the Charlie Sterner Internship program to include undergraduate seniors as well as continue to target MPA programs.
- Make community meetings more accessible by broadcasting meetings, scheduling meetings at times of the day convenient to working adults, use social media to keep citizens informed, and through all the different means of communication share the positive contributions manager's make in their communities (e.g. periodic profiles of specific employees)
- Establish a "Manager in Residence" program at Universities that could include visiting classes to lecture/talk to students, panel discussions to undergraduate and graduate students, and teaching courses
- Identify entry-level professional jobs in local government, create the position and then market those opportunities to universities through their Career Centers (primarily reaching undergraduates) and through their graduate program directors, especially MPA Directors
- Re-branding ideas could include featuring how managers do a variety projects through-out the year, do meaningful work that directly impacts the quality of life of all types of citizens, do work that helps find solutions to complex problems, and do have careers by moving to other municipalities (if they want)

Conclusion

On behalf of the participants in the Innovation Lab, we hope our discussion offers some useful ideas. Villanova's Department of Public Administration is now a "strategic partner" with ICMA. We plan to enhance our efforts to reach undergraduates, to continue to feature the profession in our MPA online and on-campus program, and to offer more information to the profession generally.