The Boom Was Real, Until It Wasn’t

A Sudden Decrease in the Marginal Efficiency of Capital
By Gregory P. Nowell
A Message from the Dean

Vincent Abramov, BA ’67
Director, Security & Occupational Health Manager
Overseas Buildings Operations, U.S. Department of State

Catherine Berlin, BA ’71
Professor of Public Administration
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs
Syracuse University

Jeffrey Block, BA ’83
Partner, Public Strategies

Marsha Boyle, MPA ’70
Senior Vice President, The洗衣店 Organization

Patricia Campbell, BA ’71, MLS ’78
Executive Vice President, LIU University

John Cape
Managing Director, Public Financial Management, Inc.

Tiffany Casey, BA ’74
Chair, Board of Trustees
Westchester Community College

Dana Chavers
Legislative and Policy Analyst
Americans for Financial Reform

Garth Chivers, BA ’77
Citizen, Dust, Polk & Wardwell

Mary Ann Coty, BS ’79, MPA ’82
Independent Consultant

James Douglas, MPA ’72
Director, Office of Human Resources, Sonoma State Institutional

Charles Folsom, BA ’73
VP of Government Relations, The American Insurance Association

Mark Dugger
Assistant Deputy Director, Office of Domestic Reduction
Office of Domestic and International Drug Control Policy

Margaret Grudin, MPA ’77
Executive Director and Chief Administrative Officer
Office of New York State Indian Affairs

Robert Herman
Professor, Author, and Columnist

Theresa Murnane, BA ’78
Partner, Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP

Frank Junt, BS ’80
Corresponding Member, Fletcher, Hildreth & Hildreth, PLLC

Lawrence J. Korb, PhD ’69
Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress

Michael Lampert, BA ’73
Senior Economist and General Counsel, BOC Securities

Jake F. Albright, BA ’89
Executive Vice President, Market Regulation
Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA)

Jennifer Maranow, BA ’86
Senior Vice President, Public Safety and Homeland Security
Bates, Federal Communications Commission

Laura Misner, BA ’86
Hospitalist, Northwell Health

Jeffrey Nihal, BA ’89
Partner, Mollen, Aron, Stein, Waghorn & Flors LP

Brian Plews, BA ’79
Senior Partner, Plews & Adler, P.C., Columbus, OH

Rob Pooyan, MPA ’91
Senior Director, Public Finance Ratings Group
Standard and Poor’s Ratings Services

Daniel Schuman, BA ’79
Director, Congressional Budget and Legislative Counsel
The American Conservative Union Foundation

Howard Shephard
Attorney and past President & Chief Executive Officer
The Economic Association of New York State

Paul Tranca, BA ’73
Management Analyst, Washington Square Partners

Lewis Winner, BA ’84
Partner, Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP

Bruce Wing, MPA ’73
Independent Consultant

Advisory Board

In Praise of Intellectual Diversity

Everyone knows what diversity means when the word is used in an organizational context. We usually think of the diversity of personnel in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and other personal attributes. In higher education, it is also important to have intellectual diversity — variety in disciplinary perspectives, the methods used by investigators when they do research, and the substantive areas of specialization such as economics, history, political science, sociology, and psychology, to name a few. For a public affairs school, diversity is very important and I am proud to say that at Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, intellectual diversity is one of our hallmarks. This is exemplified by the local to global reach of our faculty and the course offerings in our six degree programs. Student interests are similarly broad and span local government, state and government and international governmental relations, and public policies including trade, health, education and homeland and international security. Meanwhile at the College, students and faculty in the field of political theory study and write about timeless issues that confront the body politic.

This issue of the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy News magazine highlights our intellectual diversity. The local to global graphic featured at the center of the magazine shows you the breadth of research activity that goes on at the College, and you have to admit that it is truly impressive. Where else can you find studies of traffic safety, gender disparities, social movements in Southeast Asia, trade policy, international sanctions, and terrorist networks, plus a fresh look at the intellectual diversity. The local to global graphic featured at the center of the magazine shows you the breadth of research activity that goes on at the College, and you have to admit that it is truly impressive. Where else can you find studies of traffic safety, gender disparities, social movements in Southeast Asia, trade policy, international sanctions, and terrorist networks, plus a fresh look...
Reopening Locke: Rockefeller College Scholar Takes a Fresh Look at the Great Political Thinker

Hundreds of years of scholarship on John Locke, the brilliant 17th century English thinker who profoundly influenced the American founding fathers, have solidly established the conventional wisdom on the man and his work. Nevertheless, new insights into the philosopher are being offered by Torrey Shanks, assistant professor of political science.

An icon of the Age of Enlightenment, John Locke is responsible for such cherished concepts as rule of law, government by consent, and natural rights. Shanks’s fresh look at Locke yields a new interpretation of the social contract and reveals the philosopher not only as a master of reasoned political and social thought, but also as a skilled rhetorician, who engaged the political imagination of the people. “One of the things I like about studying Locke,” explains Shanks, “is that over the last three centuries many people have written about him. He is such a shared area of conversation. I’m trying to introduce a less familiar version of somebody who’s taken for granted.”

Professor Shanks is currently working on a book that builds on the doctoral dissertation she completed at Northwestern University, Political and Social Thought of John Locke. Shanks holds that Locke understood that significant political change required not just new theory, but also on the ability of the people to imagine themselves anew, as citizens with rights, living equally under the law, and under a government of limited authority. She suggests that to affect this change in psyche, Locke, using rhetoric and satire, presented ideas to different audiences by weaving together diverse traditions of thought and integrating them into a new political self-understanding — enabling subjects to imagine themselves living with rights under law. Professor Shanks adds that Locke, who was such a language and political argument familiar to ordinary people “in interesting and innovative ways.”

She also acknowledges “two faces of Locke” — celebrating liberty yet proponent of authority, wealth, and property rights. For Shanks, this duality reflects the different audiences Locke wished to reach. “We can be associated with some of the best and worst in American political culture, so that certainly speaks to his influence,” she notes.

“Examining his texts is about ‘critical inheritance,’” meaning these ideas we’ve inherited from Locke are influential, we need to question them. I’m arguing that there’s something new and better to find in these deeply familiar ideas.”

Torrey Shanks hopes to complete her manuscript by year’s end, but her work on Locke will continue. Next, she’ll focus on Locke’s arguments for religious toleration. She’s also eager to dive into the work of other great writers and philosophers of the early modern period. “I’m excited to find important elements of political imagination in Locke, but I think there are richer texts out there that I want to explore.”

With his new spring offering, The Politics, Economics, and History of Food, Rockefeller College Political Science Professor David Rousseau has found a way to what undergraduates appreciated for debate about important food-related public policy.

“Everything about food is political,” asserts Rousseau. “How we define organic is political. What the food pyramid looks like is political. People’s purchases have political implications. When they buy fair trade, that’s a political statement. I just thought it would resonate more with students if we talked about these topics over dinner.”

Among other issues the professor serves up for consideration during the 12-week course are: sustainable agriculture, genetically modified foods, obesity, commodity prices, and food labeling. “Hopefully, the meal is an anchor that will help students remember this material for a long time and a web to help them see how all these things are connected,” he added.

Helping to make the news stronger is a unique collaboration between academia and the culinary arts. In preparation for the course, the international relations expert joined forces with the University at Albany’s dining services provider, Chartwells, to plan menus related to policy areas — regional, national, and global — covered in the syllabus. Each week, Chef Ryan Poole was tasked with preparing a meal that inspired discussion on the issue at hand. Students were introduced to foods from all over the world including Ethiopia’s national dish, a spicy chicken concoction called Doro Wat; Platillo Moros y Cristiano or Cuban rice and beans; Alma Keema, a meat and potato curry from India; Bacalao, or salt cod from the Basque region; and winter corn chowder and corn, zucchini and tomato pie, two Native American specialties. “Chartwells Chef Ryan Poole has a million things to do but he made time to participate. I’d love to have the chef there every week making dinner right in class,” remarked Rousseau.

David Rousseau uses a team-based learning approach that divides the class into groups or “dining tables” to achieve his primary objective — starting students about argumentation. Working in groups, students research policy issues and begin to develop debating skills that they’ll be required to call upon when their team goes head-to-head with another during one of Rousseau’s scheduled in-class debates. The Patroon Room dining area in the UAlbany Campus Center becomes a makeshift classroom for the semester where students gather to enjoy a bite, test their knowledge, hear from guest speakers, and practice their powers of persuasion with fellow dining table members.

“We don’t tell them which side of the debate they’re going to argue until the toss of the coin when they come in,” explains Rousseau. “It forces them to be able to argue both sides and then come to a conclusion. It’s active learning through students teaching other students. I push them pretty hard. They don’t want to let their teammates down.”

Professor Rousseau admires the class is “very demanding,” and incorporates elements that “make people uncomfortable.” Still and all, scores on student evaluations have been high. “The course is fascinating to me because I am writing my honors thesis on a food policy issue,” said Becky Puritz, one of 21 undergraduates who signed up to take the initial spring 2010 offering of The Politics, Economics, and History of Food. “I definitely think the communal dinners added in my enjoyment of the class and in my relationship with my teammates. It feels informal, like having dinner with my friends.”

David Rousseau is optimistic that his out-of-the-box approach will benefit students in the long run. “My hope is that five years from now they can make an argument about something important in their life or for their community. They’re not going to remember what the food pyramid is five or six months from now, or five years from now, but if you teach them how to critically think, how to collect information, how to make a choice, you’ve achieved an important goal.”

“It’s a pretty hard claim to make that after 300 years I have a new interpretation of Locke’s social contract but that’s what I’m trying to do.”

— Torrey Shanks

David Rousseau turns UAlbany’s Patroon Room dining hall into his classroom for the spring semester.

---

John Locke, the brilliant 17th century English thinker who profoundly influenced the American founding fathers
A Sudden Decrease in the Marginal Efficiency of Capital

In 1936, Keynes attributed economic crises to “a sudden decrease in the marginal efficiency of capital.” This sentence is at the heart of the current recession, so let us untangle its current relevance. Today’s financial wizards made a simple choice to chase an increasing volume of fees by making loans to people with less money and questionable credit histories. In doing so, they created a boom just before they created a bust.

Finance is organized on a mass production basis, like McDonald’s. If I put 99 cents into making a hamburger and sell it for $1, the common wisdom is that I have made a 1 percent profit. But if I roll 99 cents into a bun and meat to sell tomorrow, and sell it again, and do that all year, I make one penny 365 times. My annual rate of profit on 99 cents tied up in hamburger meat and buns is therefore 365 pennies or slightly more than 365 percent.

The same point applies to finance. If I set up a credit card operation, I pay merchants 98 cents on every dollar they bill me for customer transactions. I collect from my cardholders the full amount and net 2 cents on every dollar. That is roughly a 24 percent rate of return on the capital I use to finance merchant transactions. In the housing market, if I advance $200,000 against the purchase of a house, I collect $10,000 in fees, and sell the mortgage to investors. I get my $200,000 back, and next week, repeat the operation. In 52 weeks, I earn $520,000 in fees on $200,000 in capital, or nominally 260 percent annual return — though we are abstracting out many costs.

These examples suffice to show that modern consumer finance is essentially the same as modern fast food profit depends hugely on volume, and markups that seem small measured against the value of a single transaction become large over the course of a year.

The Boom Was Real, Until It Wasn’t

By Gregory P. Nowell
Gregory Nowell is an associate professor of political science at Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy. His areas of specialization include international relations and international political economy. Professor Nowell is the author of Mercantile States and the World Oil Cartel (Cornell University Press, 1994)

The financial industry sought customers into exotic mortgages that force them to refinance in a few years. That guarantees a new stream of fees. Also, we have to find ways to bring new people into the market because, try as they might, consumers can’t get into the mood for a new house as quickly as they can get into the mood for their next meal — so banks need new customers.

The financial industry sought customers of lower income and (not always the same thing) lower creditworthiness. And, it had to convince investors that these higher risk loans were worth buying. Borrowers were airily assured they could lose nothing so long as home values rose. Hand waving and statistical modeling assured investors, who bought these mortgages in bundles worth billions, that default rates were statistically certain to stay within predicted values.

Everyone knows some customers won’t pay their loans. But the predicted rates of default proved wrong, and the high volume finance business model crashed.

Pushing For More Customers

How do we maintain sales volume in finance? We can put people into exotic mortgages that force them to refinance in a few years. That guarantees a new stream of fees. Also, we have to find ways to bring new people into the market because, try as they might, consumers can’t get into the mood for a new house as quickly as they can get into the mood for their next meal — so banks need new customers.

The financial industry sought customers of lower income and (not always the same thing) lower creditworthiness. And, it had to convince investors that these higher risk loans were worth buying. Borrowers were airily assured they could lose nothing so long as home values rose. Hand waving and statistical modeling assured investors, who bought these mortgages in bundles worth billions, that default rates were statistically certain to stay within predicted values.

Everyone knows some customers won’t pay their loans. But the predicted rates of default proved wrong, and the high volume finance business model crashed.
People who were already under pressure due to rising commodity prices (gasoline and food) are now also out of work, and they too have become candidates for loan defaults. Sectors which have nothing to do with housing are in retreat. Detroit was already suffocating from high fuel prices when the cutoff of new car lending rolled over the automakers like an avalanche.

**Walking Off The Cliff**

So “a sudden decrease in the marginal efficiency of capital” happens this way: the first 10 million loans are conservative. The second 10 million loans are a bit riskier but are based on business sense. The third 10 million loans are made with an expert’s eye to managing known risks. The fourth 10 million loans might work out if “current conditions prevail.” The banks move through these tiers of creditworthiness because they are eager to keep up the high volumes that are their life blood. But current conditions don’t prevail, and the predicted rate of loss on loans is swamped by the actual rate of loss. Investors panic, which compounds losses even further. The system adjusts by choking off new loans; unemployment is the immediate consequence and rockets the loan default rate higher. Bankers were making money with their first 10 million loans, and their second, and their third. But they discovered, in the fourth, that they had walked off a cliff with a mob of like-minded cartoon characters. So long as all agree that all is well, they walk on air. When they look down, they all fall, and everything they do to prevent the fall makes them fall faster.

**Income Inequality: The Weakness That Banking Regulation Will Not Cure**

Now I certainly will not discourage banking regulation as one cure to the marginal-efficiency-of-capital cliff. But such regulation, by slowing down lending, also slows down real economic growth, and buys stability with higher unemployment. I am not one who believes that higher permanent rates of unemployment are a good trade-off for boom-bust cycles—nor was Keynes. The real issue underlying the housing bust is that a suburban finance model that works fairly well for the 20 percent of the country which takes home 50 percent of the aggregate income, does not work well—and even becomes brutally exploitative—when the need for more business drives lenders into the 80 percent of the country that divides the remaining 50 percent of the income.

“We can run a speculative economy in housing among the well-off, but the less well-off need better quality of life and financial security more than they need to be lured into, then evicted from, McMansions. Income-appropriate housing strategies and stabilizing family incomes against catastrophic losses (unemployment, medical) would make the financial lives of the less well-off not only more secure, but more predictable. That means a business and lending environment with less risk and less opportunity for speculative predation.

Capital’s marginal efficiency—its ability to generate profit—is linked to the volume of sales, and sales are determined by the size of the market. The size of the market is determined by the distribution of income. The current crisis reveals the social character of income and investment. Although public anger focuses on individual bankers and their bonuses, the social structure of income inequality, and the irrational investment decisions that result, could stand greater scrutiny. Secure communities require stable sources of finance for housing, but they also need stable sources of employment, protection from medical catastrophe, and some protection from the predation of commodity speculation. The financial crisis makes plain that our society is critically weak in all these domains. And that is why we remain vulnerable to a “sudden decrease in the marginal efficiency of capital.”
"Where else can you find studies of traffic safety, gender disparities, social movements in Southeast Asia, trade policy, international sanctions, and terrorist networks, plus a fresh look at the philosopher John Locke, all under one roof?"

— Dean Jeffrey D. Straussman
International


SUNY Center for International Development. Afghan Parliamentary Assistance Project, (technical assistance project).

SUNY Center for International Development. Serbian Separation of Powers Project, (technical assistance project).


SUNY Center for International Development. Afghan Parliamentary Assistance Project, (technical assistance project).

SUNY Center for International Development. Serbian Separation of Powers Project, (technical assistance project).


SUNY Center for International Development. Afghan Parliamentary Assistance Project, (technical assistance project).

SUNY Center for International Development. Serbian Separation of Powers Project, (technical assistance project).


SUNY Center for International Development. Afghan Parliamentary Assistance Project, (technical assistance project).

SUNY Center for International Development. Serbian Separation of Powers Project, (technical assistance project).


SUNY Center for International Development. Afghan Parliamentary Assistance Project, (technical assistance project).

SUNY Center for International Development. Serbian Separation of Powers Project, (technical assistance project).


The Scholarly Mr. Zimmerman
A Look Back at a Long and Distinguished Career

The quiet and well-dressed gentleman of Rockefeller College is at once a local legend and an enigmatic figure. With his northern New England accent and dignified bearing, Joseph Zimmerman, professor of political science, is recognized for his work ethic, his longevity at Rockefeller College, the red ink spilled over generations of student papers, and for his encyclopedic knowledge of federalism and intergovernmental matters. But few of those who can readily share such observations about Professor Zimmerman are aware of the scholarly achievements he has earned over a long and distinguished career.

Professor Zimmerman has garnered national recognition for his thoughtful studies of both popular and esoteric topics in federalism, and for his consistently high level of scholarly productivity. Reviews of his work reference Zimmerman’s status among scholars of federalism. For his volume, Congressional Preemption, one reviewer remarked, “Zimmerman is without a doubt among the leading scholars of federalism. He provides no less than a brilliant insight into a ‘hidden’ development of federalism…” Another individual concluded her review by noting, “Congressional Preemption should be high on the reading lists of any serious federalism or regulatory policy scholar.” The communities of political science and public administration scholars clearly share such sentiments. In 1997, Zimmerman was awarded the Donald C. Stone Award for Outstanding Academicians from the American Society for Public Administration, and in 1999 he received the American Political Science Association Award for Distinguished Federalism Scholar. Zimmerman is in business company, sharing the Stone Award with academic notables that include Del Wright, Daniel Elazar, Martha Derthick, Thomas Dye, and Robert Agranoff.

Such recognition has not laid Zimmerman to the wayside of his productivity. Since 2001, Zimmerman has published 12 volumes ranging from state-local relations, interstate cooperation, congressional preemption, and interstate disputes, to alternative models for electing the president. While his colleagues appreciate his productivity, they are more likely to comment on the value of everyday interactions with him. Speaking of Zimmerman’s command of his subject matter, one colleague remarked, “Joe has a consummate knowledge of New York State politics and has been an invaluable resource to his colleagues, many of whom were new to the state, the East Coast, and to the issues.” Zimmerman’s recall of institutional activity was also noted. “It was always impressed by Joe’s institutional knowledge,” observed a colleague. “As the department has included younger and younger faculty, he has become an invaluable resource. There is not a person here who has a greater institutional memory.” A former doctoral student agreed and observed, “No other individual on the faculty or staff can match the institutional memory he possesses. He can personally recount the hiring of every faculty member currently serving in the department. And his memory is not merely a function of his physical presence, but is the embodiment of his active participation in the life of the College and in his respect and love for people.”

Professor Zimmerman can be equally proud of the loyalty he has engendered among Rockefeller College graduates who earned their degrees under his tutelage. “Mr. Zimmerman,” as he introduces himself, or Joe Z, as his doctoral students fondly refer to him, displayed “an unwavering commitment to training the next generation of scholars,” wrote Jordan Wishy, PhD graduate of Rockefeller College, and Brian Nickerson, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Iona College, and a former doctoral student, in a joint statement. The pair added, “Ever available to students he mentored, [Professor Zimmerman] nurtured their progress through a combination of access, personal connection, scholarly insight, and uniquely swift response to their writing submissions. In contrast, many graduate students waited months for faculty review of their research. For Joe Z’s students, the difficulty was keeping up with him.”

This fall, as the venerable Mr. Zimmerman conducts his classes and collects research papers to read in preparation for his next book, he will continue to add new pages to his legacy. Carry on, Joe Z.

Mr. Zimmerman Looks Back

Q. What spurred his interest in an academic career?
A. Joe jokingly replied that his interest began courtesy of his rich Uncle Sam. While serving in the military during the period in which the Air Force separated from the Army Air Corps, Joe became a training officer. The experience of working in a new organization, with few traditions of its own, got him thinking about how one teaches effectively and creates standards. He found that he enjoyed teaching and decided to pursue his doctorate when his military service ended.

Q. At what point in his academic life did Joe become interested in the public sector?
A. It seems that the call to civic life began early and has continued unabated. Joe was active in civic affairs as a youth, and in 1947, while still a freshman at Keene State College, he joined the Civic League. His Civic League partners, Joe made his first foray into public affairs, as a managing board member of government in place of the weak mayor structure that existed in Keene.

Joe then served in the military, finished his doctorate, and began teaching in Massachusetts. While a professor at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Clark University, Joe served as a consultant to local governments, helping the state develop strategies for economic development and peacetime use of atomic energy. He also worked with local governments on neighborhood development and government structures while teaching in Massachusetts. Joe noted three public accomplishments: helping officials in Massachusetts develop strategies that led to development of the electronic highway, working with local governments on neighborhood development and government structures while teaching in Massachusetts, and helping officials in Massachusetts develop strategies that led to development of the electronic highway.

Q. What were some of Joe’s most satisfying achievements?
A. Joe mentioned a range of career highlights, for which he is justifiably proud. These include his scholarly recognition by both the American Political Science Association and the American Society for Public Administration, being cited in numerous Supreme Court decisions (one as recently as June 2010), and his public service achievements. In particular, Mr. Zimmerman noted three public accomplishments: helping officials in Massachusetts develop strategies that led to development of the electronic highway outside Boston, his role as Director of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and his role in New York State in helping ease air traffic congestion in New York City through the purchase (from the military) of the airfield that now Stewart International Airport.
Rockefeller College Welcomes New Faculty

Yvonne D. Harrison has joined Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy as assistant professor of public administration. Dr. Harrison comes to Rockefeller from the Center for Nonprofit and Social Enterprise Research at Management Science and Engineering at Stanford University, where she spearheaded the capstone research project and taught courses in nonprofit governance and information management in government and nonprofit organizations.

"In addition to my work at Rockefeller, I also offer opportunities to work with nonprofit scholars and others," said Harrison. "I was a senior fellow at the Rockefeller Institute for Government in 2008-2009 and I hope to continue these relationships in the future.

Professor Harrison has conducted three international research investigations into the role and impact of the Law and Society Association on national law and policy. Her research interests include modernization (from technological, global, and organizational development perspectives), nonprofit leadership and effectiveness, and strategic partnerships and alliances. In addition to maintaining an ambitious research agenda, Professor Harrison is teaching public management at Rockefeller this fall.
Research Center News

Rockefeller College’s research centers, institutes, and partners conduct state-of-the-art research and policy analysis, improve the knowledge and skills of employees in public and nonprofit agencies through professional development, and work with government at all levels in the United States and abroad to enhance their ability to govern effectively.

SUNY Center for International Development (SUNY/CID)

The SUNY Center for International Development (SUNY/CID) recently launched a major project on constituency development funds (CDFs) by offering a series of workshops on the topic for academics and international practitioners. In July, Research Professor Mark Baskin traveled to the UK to present a paper on CDFs at the Ninth Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians. This past September, SUNY/CID organized a roundtable on CDFs at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. Also in September at the 56th Annual Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Nairobi, Kenya, Professor Baskin led a workshop on the role of parliamentarians in facilitating grassroots projects.

In the aftermath of the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti, SUNY/CID’s project team played courage and resourcefulness in assisting the rescue efforts and supporting the nation’s subsequent efforts to rebuild. Since 2006, CID has been working in Haiti to provide technical assistance to newly established municipalities.

Center for Women in Government & Civil Society (CWGCS)

The Center for Women in Government & Civil Society (CWGCS) launched its newest initiative, the Women’s Leadership Academy (WLA), on November 30, 2010 with State University of New York Chancellor Nancy Zimpher as host. WLA programming includes the Fellowship on Women & Public Policy, an intensive, semester-long leadership development program for graduate and postgraduate level students pursuing careers in public policy, and NEW! Leadership New York, a week-long undergraduate leadership development program designed to encourage women to run for elected office.

Professional Development Program (PDP)

A number of projects developed by the Professional Development Program (PDP) were honored with awards this year. The Tobacco Recovery Resource Enhance a learning Aid” and “Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome,” an e-learning course, received APEX Awards of Excellence for Education and Training in the Electronic and Video Publications category. PDP also received a bronze award for a suite of online modules created for the “Tobacco Interventions Project,” in the category of best practice in distance learning programming from the United States Distance Learning Association (USDAL).

The Project on Violent Conflict (PVC)

In partnership with the University of Arizona and the Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), the Project on Violent Conflict (PVC) has been awarded a grant from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). The grant is titled “New Analytic Methods for the Exploitation of Open-Source Structured Databases to Enhance Situational Awareness for Effective Counter-WMD Strategies.” Last January, the PVC team traveled to the International Center for the Study of Terrorism (ICST) at Penn State for continued work on “Bomb to Bombslayer,” a study of the Provisional Irish Republican Army’s use of and innovations in improvised explosive devices. In summer, the PVC staff presented their article “Sexual Combinations: Studying the Structure of Terrorist Networks” at the first International Conference on Cross-Cultural Decision Making in Miami.

NYS Executive Honored by Rockefeller College

Executive Deputy Comptroller Mark P. Pattison of the Office of State and Local Government Accountability in the Office of the State Comptroller was honored by the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy during the 26th Annual John E. Burton Lecture & Distinguished Public Service Awards Ceremony at Page Hall on Tuesday, April 20, 2010.

The event, hosted by University at Albany President George M. Philip, honors individuals who have dedicated their careers to serving the people of New York. Lieutenant Governor Richard Ravitch, recognized during the ceremony by the University for his outstanding accomplishments, delivered the keynote address.

Describing Mark Pattison’s service to his community as “truly extensive,” Dean Jeffrey D. Staczuk presented the deputy comptroller with the distinguished service award mediation on behalf of the College. The son of former U.S. Representative Edward “Ted” Pattison, Mr. Pattison recalled how his family had always placed great importance on helping the community. “I believe, despite what we hear today, that the spirit of public service is alive and well,” he noted. “I want to thank the University at Albany for maintaining this important tradition of celebrating public service, and Rockefeller College for honoring me and others. I am humbled by the award.”

Mark Pattison was appointed Executive Deputy Comptroller for the Office of State and Local Government Accountability by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo on May 7, 2007. He previously served as the Deputy Comptroller for Local Government Services and Economic Development, and as Mayor of Troy, New York from 1996 through 2003. He worked at the Rensselaer County Chapter of the Association for Retarded Citizens for 20 years, including six years as its director, and served as a member of the City of Troy’s school board, president of Vanderheyden Hall, vice-chair of the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce, chairperson of the Hudson Mohawk Heritage Area Commission and president of the New York State Association of Community and Residential Agencies. Mark Pattison was a trustee and faculty member of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, and has served on several community boards, including the Center for Economic Growth and the Commission for Economic Opportunity.

The Burton lecture is named for John E. Burton, who served as New York’s budget director under Governor Thomas E. Dewey from 1942 to 1950. Burton, who was credited with modernizing the state’s budget process, was also a member of the special committee that recommended the creation of the State University of New York System.

For more information on the activities of Rockefeller College’s research centers and partners, visit us online at www.albany.edu/rockefeller.

NYS Executive Honored by Rockefeller College

Executive Deputy Comptroller Mark P. Pattison of the Office of State and Local Government Accountability in the Office of the State Comptroller was honored by the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy during the 26th Annual John E. Burton Lecture & Distinguished Public Service Awards Ceremony at Page Hall on Tuesday, April 20, 2010.

The event, hosted by University at Albany President George M. Philip, honors individuals who have dedicated their careers to serving the people of New York. Lieutenant Governor Richard Ravitch, recognized during the ceremony by the University for his outstanding accomplishments, delivered the keynote address.

Describing Mark Pattison’s service to his community as “truly extensive,” Dean Jeffrey D. Staczuk presented the deputy comptroller with the distinguished service award mediation on behalf of the College. The son of former U.S. Representative Edward “Ted” Pattison, Mr. Pattison recalled how his family had always placed great importance on helping the community. “I believe, despite what we hear today, that the spirit of public service is alive and well,” he noted. “I want to thank the University at Albany for maintaining this important tradition of celebrating public service, and Rockefeller College for honoring me and others. I am humbled by the award.”

Mark Pattison was appointed Executive Deputy Comptroller for the Office of State and Local Government Accountability by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo on May 7, 2007. He previously served as the Deputy Comptroller for Local Government Services and Economic Development, and as Mayor of Troy, New York from 1996 through 2003. He worked at the Rensselaer County Chapter of the Association for Retarded Citizens for 20 years, including six years as its director, and served as a member of the City of Troy’s school board, president of Vanderheyden Hall, vice-chair of the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce, chairperson of the Hudson Mohawk Heritage Area Commission and president of the New York State Association of Community and Residential Agencies. Mark Pattison was a trustee and faculty member of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, and has served on several community boards, including the Center for Economic Growth and the Commission for Economic Opportunity.

The Burton lecture is named for John E. Burton, who served as New York’s budget director under Governor Thomas E. Dewey from 1942 to 1950. Burton, who was credited with modernizing the state’s budget process, was also a member of the special committee that recommended the creation of the State University of New York System.

For more information on the activities of Rockefeller College’s research centers and partners, visit us online at www.albany.edu/rockefeller.
Rockefeller MPAs Named Presidential Management Fellows

Two members of the Class of 2010 have been named Presidential Management Fellows by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). After receiving their MPAs this past May, Carmen Brick of New York City and Courtney Asker of Utica journeyed to Washington, D.C. to accept the prestigious title of Presidential Management Fellow and begin their careers in public administration.

The highly competitive Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF) Program provides paid fellowships with a network of federal agencies to outstanding recent graduates who have demonstrated excellence in their academic field and a strong commitment to public service. Applicants are nominated by their schools and undergo an extended assessment process. Upon successful completion of their two-year fellowships, Brick and Asker, both public finance specialists, will be appointed to permanent positions within the federal government.

“The coursework at Rockefeller College has been particularly useful in helping me gain this fellowship,” said Brick, who has been working in the Department of Housing and Urban Development to be a financial analyst. “Also, being in a center of government, as you are while studying at Rockefeller College, provides a lot of opportunities for internships. I worked at Public Financial Management, a consulting firm in D.C. on a former New York State budget director and I interned at the New York State Assembly. There’s a wide range of opportunities here at Rockefeller,” added Brick.

“On your career as a fellow and a have a target position that they’re training you for so it’s a little bit more of a mentorship,” explained Courtney Asker. “Instead of just starting in an entry-level job, you get more built-in benefits and support. It’s a way to start a career. I’ll be in the Strategic Planning Office for the Asia and Middle East Bureau of the U.S. Agency for International Development working towards becoming a financial management specialist.

When reminded that fewer than 10 percent of this year’s applicants were selected as Presidential Management Fellows, Courtney Asker quipped, “It’s quick to give much of the credit to her alma mater, Rockefeller College prepared us well,” she replied.

Student News

MPA student Bridget Baker recently completed an internship at the NYS Assembly working for Professor Helen Dewolos.

Matthew Burns is in his final semester of the PMF program specializing in homeland security studies. Since November, Matthew has been serving through AmeriCorps as the liaison for New York State Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (NYVOD) at the NYS Emergency Management Office.

Kathy Dop, a PhD student in political science, presented three papers at conferences: “Checking Election Outcome Accuracy: Post-Election Auditing Provisions” and “The Interplay of Constituent Makeup and Electoral Methods on Legislative Representation for Minority and Majority Groups” at the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA), April 2010; and “Checking Election Outcome Accuracy: Post-Election Auditing Provisions” at the Southern Political Science Association (SPSA), January 2010.

MPA student Taulih Edwards has been actively involved in a Center For Technology in Government (CTG) research project, “Building a Sustainable International Digital Government Research Community.” Taulih worked on a report that provided a baseline against which to measure the future development of internationally oriented digital government research. Taulih also took part in organizing the 2010 Give Research Institute held in the Hague and Delft, The Netherlands this past summer.

Earlier this year, MPA students Kate Gargiulo and Ryan Ashe were awarded Art Silf Fellowship by the SUNY Center for International Development. They both spent the summer in Africa as interns for CID. Kate was assigned to the Linkages Project in Uganda while Ryan interned with the Kenyan Parliament in Nairobi.

Public Administration PhD student Navid Ghaffarzadeh co-authored a paper titled “Economic Transition Management in a Commodity Market: The Case of the Iranian Cement Industry” with Stephen Weinberg in the ASPA’s Annual Conference in San Jose.

In January 2010, doctoral student Toewoo Nam presented a paper titled “Whither Digital Equality?: An Empirical Study of the Democratic Divide” at the 43rd Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS) in Poipu, Kauai, Hawaii. Toewoo was a member of the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) team that recently developed and submitted a new research proposal to the National Science Foundation’s Science, Technology, and Society program. The proposed research focuses on studying how the growing capabilities and use of mobile technologies can be effectively channeled and implemented to improve the delivery of human services.

Pictured from top: Sist Fellow Kate Gargiulo; Ryan Ashe meets with United States Ambassador to Kenya Michael E. Ranneberger; Jayson Kratoville sighting in during his internship in Athens; and doctoral student Niyousha Hosseinichemeh.
An Alumna Shares Career Lessons

If you ever doubted that a graduate program can launch a career and make you astute about professional achievement, just ask Martha Gagné. Martha, a federal employee in the Senior Executive Service and Assistant Deputy Director in the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Office of Demand Reduction, completed her MPA at Rockefeller College in 1991 and then embarked on a career with an enviable trajectory. Along the way, Martha learned valuable lessons about the skills, experiences, and choices that keep a career in motion.

According to Martha, her success began with her coursework at Rockefeller College and continued with a fellowship with the New York State Division of the Budget (DOB). The master’s program coursework got her into DOB and taught her critical thinking skills and the value of finding career mentors. On graduating, Martha wore a budget analyst in charge of the higher education portfolio at DOB; gave her new analytic tools and a strong platform from which to move into a federal position. The federal government, Martha observed, considers New York a cutting-edge state, and “federal officials find it invaluable to hire individuals with state experience precisely because it is so difficult to know the impact of policy and implementation decisions on states.”

After just one year at DOB, Martha was selected for a position with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in Washington. Her portfolio at OMB was considered a cross-cutting type, evaluating the effectiveness of the array of programs focused on drug control and treatment. Finding the work in drug policy matters to be important and professionally satisfying, Martha made it her business to learn how to move into more central policy and management positions in government. “I found that often you have to leave federal government in order to move up in it,” Gagné shared. Her mentors understood that the federal government selects individuals for senior policy positions that have the seasoning afforded by multi-sectoral and cross-national experience. Senior officials need to know how to work effectively across boundaries, cultures, and organizations.

With this advice in mind, after three years, Martha left her position in OMB and moved into the nonprofit service provider’s responsibilities. Martha observed, considers New York a cutting-edge state, and “federal officials find it invaluable to hire individuals with state experience precisely because it is so difficult to know the impact of policy and implementation decisions on states.”

This effort produced the Anti-Drug Analytics Department at Excellus BlueCross/Blue Shield in Syracuse. Christopher Kidder, MPA ’05, has been working on developing preventive analytics for his company in the wake of the recent health reform legislation.

Congratulations to Rockefeller alumni Soonhee Kim, PhD ’98 and David Van Slyke, PhD ’99. Soonhee and David, both associate professors at Syracuse University’s Maxwell School, were each honored recently for their contributions to the field of public administration. Soonhee is this year’s recipient of the Julia B. Henderson Award given by the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) to a woman who has demonstrated her commitment to international public administration. David, whose research interests include public-private partnerships, government contracting, and strategic management, was elected as a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA).

An Educator Award from OBTs, the teaching society for management educators. His article “Uncovering a New Guilty Pleasure: A Qualitative Study of the Emotions of Personal Web Usage at Work” will be published in the Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies in Fall 2010.

Jennifer Roman ’10 is working as a Graduate Healthcare Administration Training Program (GHATP) Fellow at the VA Healthcare Network Update New York in Albany. Two Rockefeller College alums were instrumental in planning the System Dynamics Conference in Seoul, South Korea, July 25–29. Rae Moon, PhD ’92 was international program chair while fellow alum Doo Hoon Kim, PhD ’83 played a central role in overall organization for the event.

Brittany Turner, MPA ’10 is working at the New York State Archives on a National Historical Publication and Records Commission (NHPRC) funded project about archival security, theft prevention and replevin for historical records and repositories, including governments. Brittany began her MUS through the University of Alabama online cohort this fall.

Pictured from top: Michael Christakis ‘03, ’05; Jennifer Roman ’10, Soonhee Kim ’98; David Van Slyke ’99; Russell Hassan ’10, and Rockefeller alumni enjoying a mini reunion at the International Conference of the System Dynamics Society in Seoul, South Korea this past July.

Alumni News & Notes

If you ever doubted that a graduate program can launch a career and make you astute about professional achievement, just ask Martha Gagné. Martha, a federal employee in the Senior Executive Service and Assistant Deputy Director in the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Office of Demand Reduction, completed her MPA at Rockefeller College in 1991 and then embarked on a career with an enviable trajectory. Along the way, Martha learned valuable lessons about the skills, experiences, and choices that keep a career in motion.

According to Martha, her success began with her coursework at Rockefeller College and continued with a fellowship with the New York State Division of the Budget (DOB). The master’s program coursework got her into DOB and taught her critical thinking skills and the value of finding career mentors. On graduating, Martha wore a budget analyst in charge of the higher education portfolio at DOB; gave her new analytic tools and a strong platform from which to move into a federal position. The federal government, Martha observed, considers New York a cutting-edge state, and “federal officials find it invaluable to hire individuals with state experience precisely because it is so difficult to know the impact of policy and implementation decisions on states.”

After just one year at DOB, Martha was selected for a position with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in Washington. Her portfolio at OMB was considered a cross-cutting type, evaluating the effectiveness of the array of programs focused on drug control and treatment. Finding the work in drug policy matters to be important and professionally satisfying, Martha made it her business to learn how to move into more central policy and management positions in government. “I found that often you have to leave federal government in order to move up in it,” Gagné shared. Her mentors understood that the federal government selects individuals for senior policy positions that have the seasoning afforded by multi-sectoral and cross-national experience. Senior officials need to know how to work effectively across boundaries, cultures, and organizations.

With this advice in mind, after three years, Martha left her position in OMB and moved into the nonprofit service provider’s responsibilities. Martha observed, considers New York a cutting-edge state, and “federal officials find it invaluable to hire individuals with state experience precisely because it is so difficult to know the impact of policy and implementation decisions on states.”

This effort produced the Anti-Drug Analytics Department at Excellus BlueCross/Blue Shield in Syracuse. Christopher Kidder, MPA ’05, has been working on developing preventive analytics for his company in the wake of the recent health reform legislation.

Congratulations to Rockefeller alumni Soonhee Kim, PhD ’98 and David Van Slyke, PhD ’99. Soonhee and David, both associate professors at Syracuse University’s Maxwell School, were each honored recently for their contributions to the field of public administration. Soonhee is this year’s recipient of the Julia B. Henderson Award given by the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) to a woman who has demonstrated her commitment to international public administration. David, whose research interests include public-private partnerships, government contracting, and strategic management, was elected as a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA).

An Educator Award from OBTs, the teaching society for management educators. His article “Uncovering a New Guilty Pleasure: A Qualitative Study of the Emotions of Personal Web Usage at Work” will be published in the Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies in Fall 2010.

Jennifer Roman ’10 is working as a Graduate Healthcare Administration Training Program (GHATP) Fellow at the VA Healthcare Network Update New York in Albany. Two Rockefeller College alums were instrumental in planning the System Dynamics Conference in Seoul, South Korea, July 25–29. Rae Moon, PhD ’92 was international program chair while fellow alum Doo Hoon Kim, PhD ’83 played a central role in overall organization for the event.

Brittany Turner, MPA ’10 is working at the New York State Archives on a National Historical Publication and Records Commission (NHPRC) funded project about archival security, theft prevention and replevin for historical records and repositories, including governments. Brittany began her MUS through the University of Alabama online cohort this fall.

Pictured from top: Michael Christakis ‘03, ’05; Jennifer Roman ’10, Soonhee Kim ’98; David Van Slyke ’99; Russell Hassan ’10, and Rockefeller alumni enjoying a mini reunion at the International Conference of the System Dynamics Society in Seoul, South Korea this past July.
Now there’s a convenient way to update your contact info and share your news with fellow alumni. Rockefeller College’s Office of Career & Alumni Programs invites you to take advantage of a new online form that makes staying in touch quick and easy. Have a new job? Recently been promoted? Maybe you’ve just received an award or published an article or book. Weddings, babies, new address, interesting travels? We’d love to hear what you’re up to.

At Rockefeller, we’re very proud of our alumni and rely on them to help make our special events and programming meaningful for students. “It’s important for alumni to stay involved with the College as mentors or volunteers, as it provides a legacy for current and prospective students,” explains Jennifer Williams, director of internships and career programs. The College needs alums to participate as guest speakers at career workshops and networking events; share news about job or internship opportunities; and serve as the point of contact for students interested in learning more about careers in public affairs through an informational interview. Our new online form makes it easy to choose the volunteer or mentoring opportunity that’s right for you.

Stay connected by visiting Rockefeller College at www.albany.edu/rockefeller/career.shtml.