



Newsletter of the  
**ASPA Section on  
Professional and  
Organizational  
Development**

**SPOD**

ASPA SECTION ON PROFESSIONAL AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AUGUST 2025



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRS



**Dr. Seth Wright**

Assistant Teaching Professor  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Harrisburg.  
[@SethRWright](#)



**Dr. Thanh Hoang**

Assistant Professor  
Southern Connecticut State  
University.  
[@ThanhThiHoang](#)

Dear ASPA-SPOD Members,

We are delighted to begin our term as co-chairs for the Section on Professional and Organizational Development. Seth is Assistant Teaching Professor of Political Science and Public Policy and Professor in Charge of Political Science and Public Policy at The Pennsylvania State University Harrisburg. Minnie is Assistant Professor and MPA Program Coordinator at Southern Connecticut State University. Together, we're committed to serving alongside such a talented board and membership.

We're extremely thrilled to start this term with such an energetic community. In this issue, we celebrate new and outgoing board members, highlight our April conference panel on the human side of public service, and applaud our scholarship and award winners. We also look ahead to more engagement through the Annual Capstone Global Panel, PAQ awards, and upcoming professional development webinars.

Please join us in welcoming our new board members:

**Chair-Elect:** Dr. Ralph R.J. Johnson, Director of Council Affairs, City of Shreveport - Shreveport, LA

**Secretary:** Yeobin Yoon, Ph.D. Candidate, The Pennsylvania State University Harrisburg.

**Head of Communication and Strategy:** Abdollah (Abdi) Zeraatpisheh, Ph.D. Candidate, The University of Texas at Dallas

**Treasurer:** Dragana (Dasha) Djukic-Min, Ph.D. Candidate, The University of Texas at Dallas.



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRS

## **Board Members at Large**

- Dr. Diana Al-Fayez, Assistant Professor & Head of the Public Administration Department, The University of Jordan
- Dr. Shpresa Kaciku Balijsa, Lecturer, University Kadri Zeka; CEO, ASTERA ML
- Dr. Kyungmin Lee, Biden School of Public Policy & Administration, University of Delaware
- Dr. Gerome Q. Banks, Social Science Researcher

**Immediate Past Chair:** Dr. Zeeshan Noor, Assistant Professor/Program Director, Institute for Nonprofit Administration and Research, Louisiana State University in Shreveport

We are super grateful to our outgoing board members for their service and contributions: Keesha Gill, Paige L. Moore, Jyoti Aggarwal, Ahmed Rafi, Ratna Dougherty and Rafiu Laguda.

At April's ASPA conference, our SPOD panel, "Not Just Robots: Building Better Humans in Public Service," reminded us that public service is less about perfectly executing procedures and more about the messy, creative, and deeply human work of making things better. The panel featured:

- Layana Abu Touq, Senior Program Manager, The Moynihan Center - "From Classroom to Public Service: Designing Transformative Fellowships"
- Jyoti Aggarwal, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Texas at Dallas; Member Board of Trustees, Northeast Conference on Public Administration - "From Pawn to King: Leveraging Chess for Leadership Development through Creative Education"
- Seth P. Wright, Assistant Teaching Professor, The Pennsylvania State Harrisburg - "Subversion as Public Value: Reframing Change in Public Administration"

We also celebrated April's **ASPA-SPOD scholarship winners:**

- Rajni Jaiswal (Pace University),
- Youngseok Yoon (University of Texas at Dallas), and
- Moonsoo Lee (University of Texas at Dallas).

Congratulations as well to Drs. Dimitrijevska-Markoski, Nukpezah, and Azhar for receiving the Volume 48 **2024 Best Article Award for Public Administration Quarterly (PAQ)** for "Service Delivery During Crises: The Effects of Organizational Capacity, Collaboration, and Public Service Motivation on Organizational Resilience."

Looking ahead, we will continue to foster engagement through initiatives such as the Annual Capstone Global Panel, PAQ journal awards, and a planned series of professional development webinars. Your input and collaboration



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRS

are essential to these efforts. We encourage you to share your accomplishments and stories with us; they not only inspire but also strengthen our community. Follow us on X and LinkedIn to stay connected.

On behalf of the ASPA-SPOD board, thank you for the privilege of serving as your Section Co-Chairs. Our gratitude goes to Abdollah Zeraatpisheh (Abdi) and his team for their dedication to this newsletter, and to all of you for your ongoing support.

Thanks for reading and for being part of ASPA-SPOD. Our work is totally better, and infinitely more interesting, because of the people in this community. Stay connected, keep sharing your stories, and don't be shy about jumping in on upcoming initiatives.

Until next time, may your meetings be brief, your ideas bold, and your coffee strong.

Yours in anticipation of a more beautiful world,

**Minnie Hoang & Seth P. Wright**

Co-Chairs, ASPA-SPOD

## ARE YOU ON THE JOB MARKET? SPOD CAN HELP !!!

Our initiative, "SPOD Members on the Job Market" connects ASPA members in SPOD to potential employers, including academia, federal, state and local governments, nonprofits, and the private sector.

If you are on the job market, please contact our Head of Communication and Strategy: Abdi Zeraatpisheh via [abdollah.zeraatpisheh@utdallas.edu](mailto:abdollah.zeraatpisheh@utdallas.edu).

We will post your information and make it visible across all commonly used social media platforms. We look forward to working together to meet your career goals!





# SPOD Board

## 2025 – 2027 Term

### CO-CHAIR



**Dr. Seth Wright**

Assistant Teaching Professor  
The Pennsylvania State  
University Harrisburg.

🐦 [@SethRWright](https://twitter.com/SethRWright)

### CO-CHAIR



**Dr. Thanh Hoang**

Assistant Professor  
Southern Connecticut State  
University.

🐦 [@ThanhThiHoang](https://twitter.com/ThanhThiHoang)

### CHAIR ELECT



**Dr. Ralph R.J. Johnson**

Director of Council Affairs,  
City of Shreveport –  
Shreveport, LA.

### SECRETARY



**Yeobin Yoon**

Ph.D. Candidate  
Pennsylvania State University,  
Harrisburg

### HEAD OF COMMUNICATION & STRATEGY CHAIR



**Abdollah (Abdi) Zeraatpisheh**

Ph.D. Candidate  
The University of Texas  
at Dallas.

🐦 [@Abdii\\_zz](https://twitter.com/Abdii_zz)

### TREASURER



**Dragana (Dasha) Djukic-Min**

Ph.D. Candidate  
The University of Texas  
at Dallas.

🐦 [@djukic\\_min](https://twitter.com/djukic_min)



# SPOD Board

## 2025 - 2027 Term

### BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE



**Dr. Diana Al-Fayez**

Assistant Professor  
Head of the Public Administration Department  
The University of Jordan.



**Dr. Shpresa Kaciku Balija**

Lecturer, University Kadri Zeka  
CEO, ASTERA ML



**Dr. Kyungmin Lee**

Biden School of Public Policy &  
Administration University of Delaware.



**Dr. Gerome Q. Banks**


Social Science Researcher.

### SPOD IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR



**Zeeshan Noor, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor / Program Director  
Institute for Nonprofit  
Administration and Research  
Louisiana State University in Shreveport.

 [@ZeeNoor10](https://twitter.com/ZeeNoor10)



# Members' Spotlight



## Dr. Kyungmin Lee

We are proud of our SPOD Board Member-at-Large, Kyungmin Lee, who received the **Peter A. Larson Prize** at the University of Delaware. A Ph.D. candidate in Energy and Environmental Policy at the Biden School, her research applies AI and machine learning to advance urban sustainability and community development. She **successfully defended her dissertation**, “The Impact of Human Behaviors and the Built Environment on Energy Use and Heat in Cities,” and is **currently on the job market**. Please reach out to Dr. Lee if you come across academic opportunities.

## Abdollah (Abdi) Zeraatpisheh

Many congratulations to Abdi Zeraatpisheh, SPOD’s Head of Communication and Strategy, on receiving **the 2025 Best Academic Poster Award** at the 9th Public and Nonprofit Annual Conference at UT Dallas for his work titled “The Impact of Leadership Emotional Intelligence, Job Autonomy, and Psychological Safety on Burnout in the Public Sector.” Abdi, an ABD doctoral candidate in Public Administration at UT Dallas, brings over 20 years of senior HR leadership experience to his research on Human Resources, Performance Management, DEI, Emotional Intelligence, and Employee Well-Being. His scholarship bridges theory and practice, advancing inclusive and sustainable workplaces in public and nonprofit organizations.





# Members' Spotlight

## Dr. Gerome Bank

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Gerome Q. Banks upon his appointment as **Program Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) new Leadership for an Efficient and Accountable Government (LEAG)**. LEAG is a transformative leadership development experience designed for high-performing federal leaders who aspire to join the Senior Executive Service (SES). Through a 14-week cohort-based curriculum, participants will engage in real-world executive challenges, gain exposure to senior-level decision-making, and sharpen the leadership competencies required to deliver results in a high-accountability environment. The program emphasizes executive presence, systems thinking, strategic execution, and building a performance culture across government. As Director, Dr. Banks leads program design, delivery, execution, and evaluation, ensuring that each cohort of participants is equipped to lead with integrity, agility, and impact in service to the American people.



**Champions of Talent**  
for the federal workforce



**Executive Development Programs**

Welcome to opm.gov



**For more information about the  
LEAG program**

<https://www.opm.gov/services-for-agencies/executive-development-programs/#url=LEAG>



# Members' Spotlight



## Dr. Hindy Lauer Schachter

Many congratulations to Hindy Lauer Schachter, Professor of Management at the Martin Tuchman School of Management, New Jersey Institute of Technology, for receiving the **Academy of Management's Management History Division 2025 Diverse Voices Award**! Her research highlights the contributions of labor leaders to Progressive-era reform and the development of management concepts such as voluntarism, promoting class diversity in management thought.

## Dr. Minnie (Thanh ) Hoang

Dr. Minnie Hoang has been selected as the recipient of the **2025 Outstanding Graduate Mentor/Advisor Award**, presented by the School of Graduate and Professional Studies (SGPS) at Southern Connecticut State University. This award recognizes Dr. Hoang's extraordinary dedication, empathy, and commitment to mentoring graduate students. Minnie (Thanh) Hoang is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at SCSU. In her current role, she coordinates the newly established Master of Public Administration program and teaches courses in Public Management, Nonprofit Management, and Research Methods.





# Members' Publications

**Al-Fayez, D.,** Hijal-Moghrabi, I., & Sabharwal, M. (2025). The current state of public administration education in the MENA region. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 1-18

**Djukic-Min, D.,** Norcross, J., & Searing, E. (2025). The Effect of Shared and Inclusive Governance on Environmental Sustainability at US Universities. *Sustainability*, 17(14), 6630.

**Aggarwal, J., & Hoang, T. T.** (2025). Exploring Perceived Fairness in Performance Evaluation Among Telecommuting Employees in Public Agencies. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 07349149251347177.

**Noor, Z.,** Wasif, R., & Siddiqui, S. (2025). Volunteering in the Middle of Crisis and Politicization: The Role of Religiosity, Political Ideology, and Personal Experiences in Volunteerism Among Muslims and Christians During COVID-19. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 54(3), 614-635.

**Scutelnicu Todoran, G.,** & Crosby, A. (2025). How Successful is the Tax Treatment of Public Authorities in Advancing Employment Growth? Examining the Case of Industrial Development Agencies in New York State. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 48(1), 1-13.

**Lee, K.,** Yun, S. J., & Park, S. (2025). Varied drivers for reducing CO2 emissions in countries with legislated carbon neutrality targets: a Kaya identity clustering analysis: Lee et al. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 1-23.

STAY UP TO DATE  
WITH OUR JOURNAL  
**Public Administration**  
**Quarterly**



# Members' Presentations



**Dianna Al-Fayez, & Dough Goodman** (2025, March). How Jordan survived the COVID-19 pandemic? [Conference presentation]. American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) 2025 Annual Conference, Washington, DC.

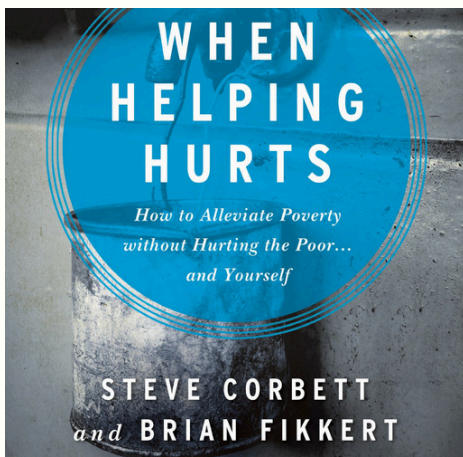
**Dianna Al-Fayez, Meghna Sabharwal & Imane Hijal Moghrabi.** (2025, March). Public administration education in the MENA region [Conference presentation]. American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) 2025 Annual Conference, Washington, DC.

**Shpresa Kaciku Balija.** (2025, July). Technological revolution: The role of tech, AI, and machine learning in political corruption [Panel presentation]. International Political Science Association (IPSA) World Congress, Seoul, South Korea.

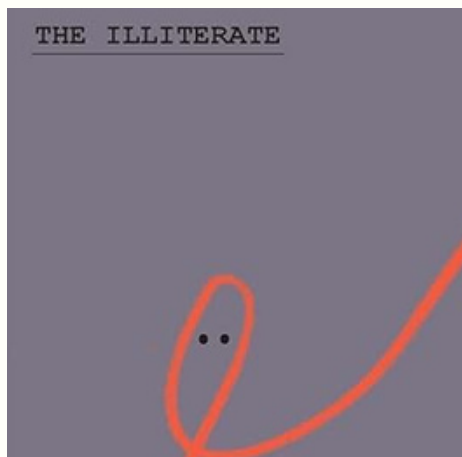
**Thanh Minnie Hoang & Jyoti Agarwal.** (2025, June). Assessing perceived fairness in performance evaluations for remote workers [Conference presentation]. Public Management Research Conference (PMRC) 2025, Seoul, South Korea.

## BOOKS TO READ

Recommended by SPOD members!



With more than 450,000 copies in print, *When Helping Hurts* is a paradigm-forming contemporary classic on the subject of poverty alleviation. *When Helping Hurts* shows how some alleviation efforts, failing to consider the complexities of poverty, have actually (and unintentionally) done more harm than good.



In 2004, late in her legendary career, Ágota Kristóf wrote this slim, incisive memoir about being a refugee after fleeing Hungary in 1956. For those of us in public service, the lesson is clear: we must write often, tell our stories, and connect our deeply humanistic work to the communities we serve. In doing so, we help keep alive the liberal democratic values we are entrusted to uphold.



The governance of natural resources used by many individuals in common is an increasing concern to policy analysts. Offering a critique of the foundations of policy analysis as applied to natural resources, Ostrom provides a unique body of empirical data to explore conditions under which common pool resource problems have been satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily solved.



# 2025 NASPAA Global Conference

## Making a Difference Globally Through Quality Public Service Education

October 8-10, 2025  
*Flagstaff, Arizona, USA*

### Flipping the AI Narrative: From Student Misuse to Public Sector Mastery

October 9, 2025 4:45 PM-5:45 PM MT

Clear Creek, 1899

AI continues to evolve and reshape the academic and administrative frameworks. Educators in public service programs are navigating how to respond to student misuse of generative tools like ChatGPT. However, what if the narrative could be flipped? What if the conversation shifted from anxiety over academic integrity to an opportunity for mastery in public service? This panel will highlight key strategies to modernize curricula, integrate AI literacy, and bridge the classroom-to-agency gap through experiential learning and applied ethics. Dr. Zeeshan Noor chairs this session.



**Seth Wright**

Assistant Teaching Professor  
Pennsylvania State Universit...



**Thanh Hoang**

Assistant Professor / Progra...  
Southern Connecticut State ...



**Shahrin Upoma**

Assistant Professor  
University of Minnesota



**Zeeshan Noor**

Assistant Professor / Progra...  
Louisiana State University in ...



# Announcement Board

November  
7-8



KEAN

## 2025 NECoPA

Democratic Governance in  
a Turbulent World:  
Innovation, Inclusion, and  
Comparative Perspectives  
in Public Administration



# NECoPA

Northeast Conference on Public Administration

## Northeast Conference on Public Administration

Intended to provide educational opportunities for scholars, practitioners, and others interested in public service in a collaborative environment by educating all on current issues, research, and practice in public and nonprofit organizations. This conference will be NECoPA's 16th year of bringing together scholars and practitioners from the northeast region, the United States, and internationally. This year's conference will be held at Kean University on November 7 and 8, and brought to you by Kean Public Affairs and New Jersey ASPA. <https://northeastpublicadmin.org/>

## #2025APPAM

Partnerships are critical for designing, implementing, and evaluating public policy, ensuring decisions are well-informed, inclusive, and adaptable. Involving diverse perspectives—from policymakers, researchers, businesses, and citizens—helps create efficient, fair policies that address complex societal challenges and build trust in public services. 2025 APPAM Fall Research Conference will explore how collaborative evidence generation and evaluation can refine policies, address unintended consequences, and improve coordination across all levels of government for transformative, resilient solutions. <https://www.appam.org/conference-events/2025appam/>



ASSOCIATION FOR  
PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS  
& MANAGEMENT

## 47th Annual Fall Research Conference

November 13-15, 2025  
Seattle, Washington



**BUILDING  
A BRIDGE  
TO**

# RENEWAL & RESILIENCE

## 2026 ASPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HOLLYWOOD, CA | MARCH 20-24

All proposals are due  
September 19, 2025.

<https://www.aspanet.org/ASPA/ASPA/Events/Annual-Conference/Annual-Conference.aspx>



# SPOD

ASPA SECTION ON PROFESSIONAL AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Connect with us!**

<https://twitter.com/SpodAspa>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/spod/>

<https://www.facebook.com/spodaspaorg>

<https://www.spod-aspa.net>

