

Public Administration Program

Newsletter

Inside

**Job Postings/
Career Opportunities**

**PA Faculty
Highlights**

Alumni Highlights

**DPA Scholar's
Highlights**

**MPA Scholar's
Highlights**



VSU offers both the Master of Public Administration and the Doctor of Public Administration Programs and both can be completed on-line. An outstanding faculty serve the Public Administration program. In addition to holding a terminal degree in their field, many of the faculty members have practical management experience in public and non-governmental organizations.

Application Deadlines

DPA: April 15 for Fall Admission

MPA: July 15 for Fall Admission, November 15 for Spring Admission, April 15 for Summer Admission

**To submit information to future newsletters,
Please click [here](#)**



Job Postings/Career Opportunities

- **Georgia Local Government Marketplace (GLGA) –**
<https://www.glga.org/>
- **American Association of Municipal Executive job board –**
<https://jobs.aame.org/>



Public Administration Faculty Highlights

Welcome New Faculty!!



Dr. Dr. Seongeok Oh New DPA Coordinator

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Seongdeok Oh as the new Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) Coordinator.

We are excited to welcome Dr. Oh to Valdosta State University and look forward to his leadership and contributions to the DPA program.

To learn more about Dr. Oh's background, research, and professional accomplishments, please visit his faculty profile:

[Profile Link](#)



Public Administration Faculty Highlights

Welcome New Faculty!!



Dr. Gilvert Angervil New MPA Coordinator

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Gilvert Angervil as the new Coordinator of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program.

We are excited to welcome Dr. Angervil to Valdosta State University and look forward to his leadership and contributions to the MPA program.

To learn more about Dr. Angervil's background, research, and professional accomplishments, please visit his faculty profile:

[Profile Link](#)



Public Administration Faculty Highlights

Dr. Keith Lee



Dr. Lee spent the spring semester at Palacky University in Olomouc, Czech Republic as a Fulbright Scholar. He taught classes on American Politics and data analysis. He also conducted research on Congress and presented his research, part of a larger book project titled "Congress at the Crossroads: Institutional Drift and the Decline of Congressional Authority," in Lublin, Poland.



Public Administration Faculty Highlights

Dr. Huishan Yang

Dr. Huishan Yang was elected as the executive board member of the ASPA Section on Complexity and Network Studies (SCNS) in May 2026. She will serve a three-year term and help guide the continued growth and success of the section. She will also start to serve as the chair of the section's election committee and continue to serve as a member of the communication committee.

Alumni Highlights



Dr. Wes Milam (DPA, 2023)

Wes Milam was promoted to Director of Public Safety Communications for the City of Fort Smith, Arkansas, in June of 2025. This is a new city department tasked with consolidating 911 emergency communications from Fort Smith and Sebastian County.

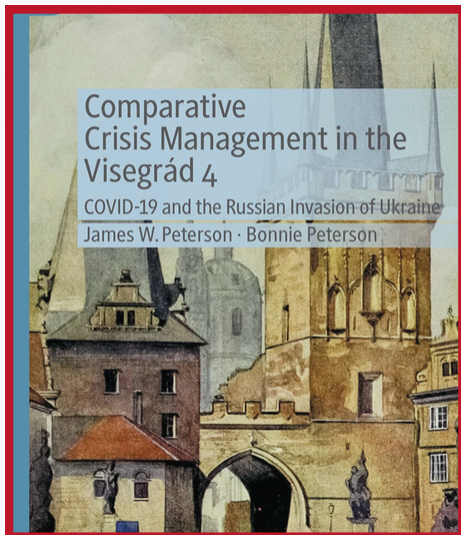
Press Release: [Link to Press Release](#)

Dr. Justin Ward (DPA, 2021)



Justin Ward was promoted to Assistant Director for Public and Governmental Affairs at ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives)

Alumni Highlights



Dr. Bonnie Peterson (DPA, 2010)

Dr. Bonnie Peterson published *Comparative Crisis Management in the Visegrád 4: COVID-19 and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine* with co-author James W. Peterson in July 2026.

[Book Link](#)



Dr. Chandria Brown (DPA, 2026)

Dr. Chandria L. Brown graduated with her Doctorate in Public Administration Spring 2026. She gives all glory and honor to God and she wants to thank the DPA faculty for their guidance and assistance.

Alumni Highlights



Dr. Phenix Culbertson (DPA, 2024)



Dr. Phenix Culbertson promoted to Director of Academic & Career Integration on the College to Career team in the Division of Student Success at Georgia State University. [**Article Link**](#)

Alumni Highlights

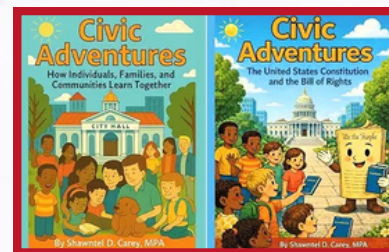


Ben Bennett (MPA, 2026)

Ben Bennett began working as a Loan Analyst with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Services Agency



Shawntel Carey (MPA, 2022)



Shawntel D. Carey, MPA ('22), continued expanding her work in civic education, public service, and community engagement during 2026.

Carey expanded the Civic Adventures series with the release of its second title, Civic Adventures: The United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights. On April 25, 2026, the book reached #1 New Release in Teen & Young Adult Politics & Government on Amazon. The series provides accessible civic education resources designed to encourage greater understanding of government, civic responsibility, and active citizenship.

Carey's civic engagement also expanded as she currently serves as a Post Seat Holder for House District 106 with the Gwinnett County Democratic Party and was elected as a delegate to the 2026 Democratic Convention of Georgia.

In higher-education service, Carey was elected Secretary of the Business Program Advisory Board at Gwinnett Technical College, where she continues supporting the connection between business education, workforce preparation, and professional practice.

Civic Adventures Series: SDC Compass Publishing LLC Catalog [Catalog Link](#)

Professional Portfolio: Shawntel D. Carey, MPA [Portfolio Link](#)

Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) Scholar's Highlights

Tricia Wisner

Tricia Wisner named North Port Assistant City Manager

Published on May 20, 2026

Tricia Wisner has been named the City of North Port's Assistant City Manager, rounding out City Manager Jerome Fletcher's leadership team.

She was selected from a pool of candidates following a hiring process that included a panel of external professional development experts and a regional City Manager.

Wisner brings a strong track record of leadership across multiple City departments. She joined the North Port Parks & Recreation Department in 2017, was promoted to Assistant Director, and helped lead major projects, including the North Port Aquatic Center and the Boundless Adventures Playground.

In July 2022, she transitioned to the Department of Public Works as Assistant Director and later Deputy Director, overseeing key infrastructure initiatives including road rehabilitation projects and the widening of Price Boulevard and the recovery from Hurricane Ian. She was appointed Utilities Director in 2025, where she continued to support essential services and the City's growth.

North Port is a rapidly growing Southwest Florida community offering a suburban lifestyle with convenient access to the Gulf Coast and the broader Sarasota region. Home to the Atlanta Braves' Spring Training operations, North Port has grown by nearly 29% since 2020 and now has a population approaching 100,000, earning recognition as one of the fastest-growing cities in the nation. The city combines abundant natural amenities and year-round recreation with expanding residential, commercial, and employment opportunities.

Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) Scholar's Highlights

Ryan Haynes

Ryan earned the Public Leadership Credential from the Harvard Kennedy School in January 2026.

Montina Young Fraiser



Montina Young Fraiser Selected for Georgia Women's Policy Institute

Montina Young Fraiser has been selected for the 2026–2027 Georgia Women's Policy Institute Statewide Cohort. This year-long program brings together women from across Georgia to strengthen their leadership, deepen their understanding of the legislative process, and develop the skills needed to advance meaningful policy change.

Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) Scholar's Highlights

Melissa Bailey



The City of Florence, Alabama Office of Planning and Community Development, led by current DPA student, Melissa H. Bailey, was awarded the 2026 Audrey Nelson Community Development Achievement Award by the National Community Development Association for the Literacy Gardens at the Florence–Lauderdale Public Library.

Bestowed in February in Washington, DC, this national recognition highlights the innovative use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to address local needs and strengthen families and neighborhoods. In Florence, a \$120,000 CDBG investment helped create two outdoor learning spaces – the Children's Garden and the Reading Garden – that expand access to early literacy, education, and technology for residents across the Shoals region.

Developed in response to challenges revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Literacy Gardens provide safe, welcoming environments for children, families, students, and seniors, particularly those in low- to moderate-income households who may lack access to reliable broadband or suitable learning spaces at home. Since opening, the project has resulted in a 40% increase in youth and family program participation, expanded access to public Wi-Fi, and a 92% community satisfaction rate.

The City's CDBG investment leveraged more than \$250,000 in private funding, demonstrating strong local support and responsible stewardship of federal resources. Today, the gardens serve as a hub for early childhood learning, lifelong education, and community wellbeing. This project stands as a meaningful example of how federal investment can create lasting, positive outcomes at the local level.

Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) Scholar's Highlights

Congratulations to our Spring 2026 DPA Graduates!!

Dr. Chandria Lynette Brown

*Analyzation of Transportation Spending for Infrastructure
Capital Improvement Versus Infrastructure Maintenance for
Highways and Bridges: Which is more Advantageous*

Dr. Blair Thomas, Political Science

Dr. Trese Lynette Flowers

*How the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program Impacted Teen
Pregnancy Rates in Georgia Counties: A Quantitive Study*

Dr. A. J. Ramirez, Political Science

Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) Scholar's Highlights

Congratulations to our Spring 2026 DPA Graduates!!

Dr. Cara Michelle King

*Disproportionate Housing Opportunities: Study of HUD
Housing Choice Voucher Program within the City of Amarillo,
Texas*

Dr. Bonnie Peterson, Political Science

Master of Public Administration (MPA) Scholar's Highlights

Congratulations to our Spring 2026 MPA Graduates!!

JOHN EDWIN BARNAS

MARSHALL R. BENNETT, III

JOE HAROLD BROWN, III

TIFFANY MONIQUE DAVIS

BRIAN JANELDRO FERGUSON

SACHA RENEE FIELDS

CORINNE GIBSON

TYKERA GOINS

JEFTA ILUYOMADE

KIMBERLI JOHNSON

KYLE S. JONES

YESENIA PADILLA MARQUEZ

SHAMIYAH MONIQUE WILLIAMS

Master of Public Administration (MPA) Scholar's Highlights

Congratulations to our Summer 2026 MPA Graduates!!

SCOTT DAVIDOFF

DONNELL DAVIS

CRYSTAL DAWSON

JAVON HENDERSON

CHARITY LUMPKIN BAYNARD

LAWRENCE MOSS

NATALEE PAUZART

SARAH SUMMER

DANIEL YOUNG