

# La Follette Notes

News for Alumni & Friends of The Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

## La Follette alumni expand influence

It is a great pleasure to be writing to you, alumni and friends, as the new associate director of the La Follette School of Public Affairs. Some of you were students when I was associate director once before, in 1995-98. Others of you were alumni connecting to students through our just-formed student association. Since I completed that term as associate director, an impressive (in number and quality) 220 students have graduated.



From the Associate Director  
Karen Holden

Our alumni are working all over the globe—in Wisconsin municipalities, state governments around the United States, international corporations, nonprofit organizations and U.S. agencies here and abroad.

Our presence abroad and in U.S. international agencies

has increased with a growing number of alumni holding Masters of International Public Affairs, a degree the La Follette School initiated in 2000 with fewer than a dozen students. Five years later, this fall's MIPA class is about twice that size, thanks in part to the leadership of Professor Melanie Manion, who completed her three-year term as associate director this summer.

The support of alumni and the influence they have around the world has become even more apparent to me as the fall semester has gotten under way. The reputation of our alumni, your own recommendations and your financial support helped us attract a strong and very able class of 2007. The students bring a wealth of experience, from interning with the U.S. Department of Commerce and multinational corporations, to researching U.S. Supreme Court retirements and global



### Student work informs policy

In the back row, La Follette School students and their professor, Andrew Reschovsky (back row, second from right), join Madison Plan Commission members, including La Follette School alum Sarah Davis, center, as they chuckle at the introduction of the class and its project for the City of Madison. See story page 2.

## Alum leads U.S. rebuilding efforts in Iraq

Ambassador Daniel Speckhard, a 1982 La Follette School of Public Affairs graduate, is putting his skills in policy analysis to the test as the head of reconstruction and assistance efforts in Iraq through the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

He oversees an \$18 billion program to support reconstruction, economic and democratic development, and security sector reforms in Iraq.

The public affairs program's emphasis on examining policy problems across disciplines in an integrated and thorough manner continues to be valuable, Speckhard says.

"This is particularly important in Iraq, where the political, security and economic issues are so deeply interdependent in this critical period," Speckhard says. "The work I am doing on reconstruction and development cannot be separated from the work on the security or political side."

Speckhard previously was director of policy planning at NATO. Earlier he was NATO's deputy assistant secretary general for political affairs; U.S. ambassador to Belarus; and deputy to the ambassador-at-large for new independent states at the State Department in Washington, D.C. ♦

### Save the dates

Two after-work events are planned for La Follette School of Public Affairs alumni.

#### Milwaukee area

Thursday, Oct. 20, 2005

University Club, 924 E. Wells St., Milwaukee  
5:30 p.m. reception  
7 p.m. program includes

La Follette School Director Donald Nichols speaking about economic trade and China.

RSVP by Oct. 14 at [www.uwalumni.com/ontheroad](http://www.uwalumni.com/ontheroad)  
Information: (888) WIS-ALUM

#### Madison area

Thursday, Feb. 2, 2006

Inn on the Park, 22 S. Carroll St., Madison  
La Follette School Student Association presents alumni, faculty and policymakers in annual reception and program.

Information: [alumni@lafollette.wisc.edu](mailto:alumni@lafollette.wisc.edu),  
or (608) 262-3581

## Board of Visitors to meet in November, welcome new members

A former secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Administration, a political science professor, a commercial real estate consultant and an insurance executive are among those joining the Board of Visitors.

The board is an advisory group the La Follette School shares with the Department of Political Science at UW-Madison.

One of the new members, **Lon Sprecher**, chief officer for business to business solutions and the international area at CUNA Mutual Group, is a La Follette School of Public Affairs graduate.

As many as six people may join the board at its Nov. 11 meeting in Madison. They include:

**George C. Edwards III**, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, who holds the Jordan Chair in Presidential Studies in the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University.

**James Klauser**, senior vice president with Wisconsin Energy Corp. He served as secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Administration for 10 years, and he served on the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents.

**Ronald Rose**, who manages a real-estate portfolio and consults with LoopLender, an affiliated commercial mortgage brokerage firm of LoopNet Inc. This follows a 30-year career in commercial real estate with Metropolitan Life, the Federal Home Loan Bank, John Hancock Real Estate Financial Services and LoopNet Inc.

Board of Visitors member and La Follette School alum **Tom Loftus** has joined the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents.

# Student projects inform policy

La Follette School students in the Public Affairs Workshops in domestic and international issues completed seven research projects in spring 2005, with five of the groups presenting their findings and recommendations to clients.

Funds to cover travel and publication expenses are provided through a generous donation from University of Wisconsin-Madison alum Wilbur R. Voigt to honor Edwin Witte, grandfather of La Follette School professor John Witte. Known as one of the founders of Social Security, Edwin Witte was a UW economist who went to Washington at the invitation of President Franklin Roosevelt to serve as executive director of the committee that drafted the Social Security Act.

In Wisconsin, the Domestic Issues class taught by Andrew Reschovsky played to a full house for the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, the mayors of Madison and Milwaukee and a joint legislative committee:

- ◆ About 15 legislators of the Wisconsin Joint Legislative Council heard about long-term health-care problems for Wisconsin's growing aged population.
- ◆ Revenue Secretary Mike Morgan and a team of analysts were given a report on Wisconsin's machinery and equipment tax exemptions.
- ◆ Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz, the Plan Commission and the Economic Development Commission met to hear a report on the city's development and permit process. The EDC later endorsed the La Follette School's recommendations, and the report garnered attention from the Wisconsin State Journal on June 12.
- ◆ Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and his Department of Administration received an analysis on a potential city sales tax.



Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz, right, makes a note while La Follette School student **Kim Herb**, left, reports on her group's recommendations for improvements to Madison's permitting process. The students presented in May to a joint meeting of the city of Madison Plan and Economic Development commissions. Herb has since graduated and is working as a consultant in Colorado. See more alumni news starting on page 3.

On the international side, Melanie Manion's students looked at a range of issues:

- ◆ One group examined the effects of the expiration of the Multi-Fiber Arrangement on South Asia and presented findings to the sponsoring agency in Washington, D.C.
- ◆ Another made recommendations to help Mexico City's police department to reduce sexual harassment and discrimination.
- ◆ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development received a summary of objectives and strategies that metropolitan governments around the world use to pursue livability and competitiveness. The team also explored partnerships between governments and non-governmental organizations to provide services.

The workshops are the capstone courses of the La Follette School's two master's degree programs, the Master of International Public Affairs and the Master of Public Affairs. The students work in teams to produce carefully crafted reports that meet high professional and academic standards and address problems in the public, non-governmental and private sectors. ◆

### Workshop reports available on web

See [www.lafollette.wisc.edu/publications.html](http://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/publications.html)

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## Alum addresses human rights, cuisine in Afghanistan

The nightlife might leave something to be desired, but 2002 international public affairs graduate Scott Braunschweig enjoys the challenges of his work in Afghanistan.

Braunschweig has started a new position as an advocacy coordinator with CARE in Afghanistan. He earlier worked for 14 months in Afghanistan for a national nongovernmental organization.

Now he will lead an initiative focused on advocacy to address the root causes of the humanitarian and human rights crisis in Afghanistan. He will analyze policies, generate organizational consen-

sus, and develop and implement advocacy strategies in collaboration with other agencies. Early efforts will concentrate on social and economic development, counternarcotics and security.

With regard to life in Afghanistan, Braunschweig reports that security threats dominate. "I can't even obtain clearance to go to the restaurants that serve poorly adapted western cuisine and extremely over-priced cheap wine. Still, for apricots, mulberries, immense hospitality, large scale post-conflict reconstruction and incredible mountain scenery—it's a good place to be." ♦

## Alumni news

**Nancy Singel Hardin Greif** is resisting suggestions that she run for county commissioner in Colorado and is focusing on farming. After receiving her master's degree from the La Follette School's predecessor, the Center for the Study of Public Policy and Administration in 1973, she was a research geologist and geophysicist and scientific administrator for the U.S.

Geological Survey until 1988, when she left to finish her Ph.D. in geology and geophysics and a law degree with a certificate in natural resources law. She worked as an attorney, mediator and arbitrator until March 2005, when she retired to start her third career as a farmer with the Durango, Colo., farmers' market. "I can assure you that my new career as a farmer is every bit as challenging as my two earlier careers," she says.

Also out in Durango, **Kim Herb**, 2005, is finding her job as a research analyst with Ecos Consulting challenging. "Pretty much with each project I get a crash course in new a subject," she says. "Anyone wanting to know about the most energy intensive processors, give me a call, I'm working on it."

Lauren Ruth Laatsch was born to Jennifer and **Brian Laatsch** on June 20. She joins her sisters Hannah and Bethany at home in Janesville, Wis. Brian is a 1993 graduate who works with Policy Studies Inc., a human services company based in Denver, Colo. His consulting work focuses on performance management and budgeting for states' child support enforcement agencies.

2005 classmates **Allison Schill** and **Natalie Walleser** are working at the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau as legislative analysts.

**Sarah K. Barry**, 2001, has been hired by Navigant Consulting in Seattle to work on Medicaid issues with state governments around the country. She previously worked in health services research at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Jeffrey Sachse** has completed coursework for his Ph.D. in political science from UW-Milwaukee and anticipates graduating in May. His dissertation focuses on the changing roles of public service commissioners following deregulation of the electricity industry and the Enron scandal.

**Thomas Hruz**, 1997, is an attorney at the Milwaukee law firm of Meissner Tierney Fisher & Nichols. He left his position as a resident fellow with the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute in 2002 after graduating from Marquette University Law School. He clerked for Justice David T. Prosser Jr. on the Wisconsin Supreme Court and for Judge John L. Coffey, on the Seventh Circuit of the United States Court of Appeals.

Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle selected **Randy Romanski**, 1995, to be his deputy chief of staff. Romanski had been the executive assistant for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. **Larry Martin**, who did some course work at the La Follette School of Public Affairs, is shifting to a new job as Romanski's replacement as executive assistant at the Department of Regulation and Licensing.

**Alan D. Paberzs**, 2005, joined Northwestern University Law School's Bluhm Legal Clinic as a budget analyst to manage the clinic's budget and daily finances.

## Alum shares expertise on Medicaid

**Marlia Moore**, 2004, an analyst with the Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau, spoke to legislators from 11 states and three Canadian provinces in July as part of the Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development.

The La Follette School has offered BILLD, the only leadership training program for Midwestern legislators, in conjunction with the Midwestern Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments for 11 years.

Moore spoke on Medicaid and explored how policymakers handle trade-offs related to access, quality, quantity and cost of health care.

Thomas Hefty, former chair and chief executive officer of Cobalt Corp. and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wisconsin, joined her.



## Alum's work paves way for internship

Second-year student **Karina B. Silver**, an intern with the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance, says alum **Sara Moore's** earlier work there as an intern prompted the office to request another La Follette School student.

Moore, a 2004 graduate, is now with the Children's Trust Fund, implementing the federal grant she worked on at the OJA. She manages two programs that help fund nine centers around Wisconsin that provide supervised visitation or safe exchange of children. Many of these families are affected by domestic abuse, sexual assault, child abuse or stalking.

"I am providing technical assistance, planning and providing trainings," Moore says. "Eventually we hope to build ... a statewide network of supervised visitation and exchange centers."

### Share your news

The La Follette School wants to share your accomplishments with alumni and friends.

Send your news to [alumni@lafollette.wisc.edu](mailto:alumni@lafollette.wisc.edu)

Alumni can keep their contact information current at [www.lafollette.wisc.edu/alumnifriends/intouch.html](http://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/alumnifriends/intouch.html)

## La Follette School professors win grants

**Menzie Chinn**, **Charles Engel** and **Clark Miller** of the La Follette School have received grants from the Center for World Affairs and the Global Economy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Each project will bring visitors to campus, hold conferences, train students, develop resources, advance research and share expertise with business, government and the public. Each project receives \$125,000 for three years.

Chinn and Engel are exploring the determinants of current account sustainability, the ability of countries to run large and persistent current account deficits. Their focus is on the world's major economies.

With other UW faculty, Miller is examining new insecurities the process of globalization has created for states and societies, with emphasis on the globalization of violence and ecological risk.



## New program opens in neuroscience, policy

The La Follette School and the Neuroscience Training Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison announce a dual-degree program. The only one of its kind in the United States, the program offers a Ph.D. in neuroscience and a master's degree in public affairs.

"Our program will train scientists and policy officials who can work hand-in-hand to bring neuroscience research to bear on public policy and to shape medical policies regarding the human brain and mental health," says **Clark Miller**, La Follette School assistant professor and program co-director.

The program is accepting applications for fall 2006. For information, contact Miller, (608) 265-6017, miller@lafollette.wisc.edu.

## Faculty news

**Menzie Chinn** presented research on the U.S. trade deficit in June and July. He was a visiting fellow with the Congressional Budget Office in the Macroeconomic Analysis Division. At a National Bureau of Economic Research conference on current account sustainability in June, Chinn and Jeffrey Frankel of Harvard University presented a paper on whether the euro will overtake the dollar as a currency held by central banks. Their work received attention in the Indian and Italian press and in blogs.

**Bob Haveman** spent a week in July at the Center for Economic Studies in Munich, Germany. He worked with researchers there to develop a method with which to estimate the level and utilization of human capital, to be included in the national income accounts of that country. The work is based upon a method presented in his 2003 co-authored book, *Human Capital in the United States from 1975 to 2000: Patterns of Growth and Utilization*.

**Carolyn Heinrich** traveled to Belo Horizonte, Brazil, to participate in a seminar on evaluating the impact of Brazil's Bolsa Familia program, "Seminário: Pesquisa de Avaliação do Impacto do Programa Bolsa Familia." The poverty reduction/human capital development program serves 28 million poor people and is expected to enroll more than 50 million as it advances.

**Karen Holden** made several presentations, one of a paper authored with **Bob Haveman** and **Barbara Wolfe**, in July at the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population in Tours, France. In June, Holden presented at Edgewood College's Summer Financial Institution on Social Security and Economic Security and gave a paper authored with Haveman and Wolfe at a workshop organized by the Centre for Economic and

Business Research, Copenhagen, on "pension reform." Holden was one of two keynote presenters at a panel in May on Social Security reform organized by Women's Task Force of the Chicago Bar Association. In May she appeared on a Madison television station to talk about United Airlines pensions and implications for retirement security. Between professional gigs, her Cajun Band played Wheatland Traditional Arts Festival, Oshkosh Sawdust Days and several spots around Madison.

**Melanie Manion** has a Chiang Ching-kuo Scholar Grant and a Fulbright Research Award that she will use to research electoral losses by candidates who are vetted and pre-selected by communist party committees for leadership positions in mainland China. She focuses on lower levels of state organization, where change in the past decade has been substantial and implications for governance are of broad significance.

**Dennis Dresang** published the fifth edition of his co-authored *Politics and Policy in American States and Communities*. He helped coordinate the 11th Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development for Midwestern legislators. He taught an online course for students completing internship programs and researched succession planning for the pending wave of baby boomer retirements in public agencies. Dresang also went bicycling in Nova Scotia.

**Jonathan Zeitlin** published a chapter in *EU Law and the Welfare State: In Search of Solidarity*. He gave presentations and papers at St. Antony's College, Oxford; the London School of Economics; the European University Institute, Florence; the European Center for Local and Regional Development, University of Florence; the Research Unit on European Governance, Collegio Carlo Alberto, Turin; the Graduate School in Social, Economic, and Political Sciences, University of Milan; and the Sussex European Institute, University of Sussex, Brighton (UK). ◆



## Students hear Hillary Rodham Clinton

La Follette School students (standing, from left) **Katie Maguire**, **Amy Whitehead** and **Melody Sakazaki** stop with Hillary Rodham Clinton at the annual Wisconsin Women in Government banquet in April. The three heard Rodham Clinton speak at Wisconsin Women in Government's 18th annual scholarship recognition dinner, thanks to Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co. sharing its table. La Follette School student **Melissa Schmidt** was among those being recognized. The Wisconsin Legislative Council selected her to receive the Bonnie Reese internship this year. Schmidt just completed her third year of earning a dual degree in public affairs and law.

## Student news

La Follette School students shared their analytical skills with state and federal agencies, businesses and non-profits around the world this past summer.

**Jeff Sartin** worked in the Economic and Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy in Colombo, Sri Lanka. He prepared reports on the public financial structure of Sri Lanka's local governments and designed a campaign advocating enforcement of intellectual property rights. He promoted U.S. government tsunami reconstruction recommendations to Sri Lanka's government. He says the best part of his experience was "being involved in the formation of public policy and working with the government of Sri Lanka on their long-term disaster management plans."

A second student in Sri Lanka, **Melissa Miller**, focused on humanitarian issues, dealing with child recruitment by the Liberation Tamil Tigers Eelam, human rights supreme court cases and tsunami relief. During a trip to southern provinces, Miller analyzed the political and economic impact of the tsunami at the post six-month mark and the status of nongovernment and government rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

**Roberto Dall'Asta** interned with the U.S. Embassy in Panama. He worked in the Public Affairs Section for the Information Office and the Cultural Affairs Office. "My duties included analyzing the Panamanian press and reviewing existing linkages between the academic communities in Panama and the U.S.," he says.

**Chris Meeks** interned with Kenya's National Council for Law Reporting, a branch of the judiciary charged with increasing the system's efficiency. He worked "directly with a group of lawyers and judges from Kenya's highest courts as we developed a new web site designed to give all Kenyans access to the laws of Kenya and other important court judgments," Meeks says.

A little closer to Madison, **Bai Linh Hoang** worked with the Department of Human Services in Salem, Ore. She helped implement policy procedures for the department's Child, Adult and Family Services Unit. She researched and analyzed child welfare-related issues by comparing state policies on child welfare, examining training curricula for social workers and compiling survey information. "This internship refined and improved my research skills, which is important to conducting good policy analysis," Hoang says. "The internship also provided me with the



Photo by Eric Wuennenberg, Performance Photo

### Governor emphasizes value of public service in graduation speech

**Wes Thimm, Natalie Walleser, Hsiu-Ching Wang and Sam Wayne** listen to Gov. Jim Doyle at the La Follette School graduation in the Assembly Chamber of the Wisconsin Capitol on May 14. Doyle touched on Wisconsin's tradition of public service and Robert M. La Follette's legacy in public service. Doyle encouraged graduates to engage in public service with the understanding they will benefit from the experience as much as their communities. "Every one of you is the product of countless investments made by your family, friends, communities, professors and even your state," Doyle said. "And today you walk out of here with the tools to return on those investments tenfold."

opportunity to explore the area of human services, particularly social welfare policy, which is my concentration at La Follette."

**Hope Siler** worked in Seattle, Wash., at a non-profit organization called Program for Early Parent Support. She spent half of her time leading education and support groups for first-time parents. She also reviewed literature on parent education and support research, curriculum development and best practices. "I gained firsthand experience with non-profit management, organizational change, and program implementation and evaluation," she says. "It was an enlightening summer!"

Out east, **Camille Salas** served as planning and initiatives intern with the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts in Vienna, Va. She developed a white paper on the organization's federal funding, researched federal funding opportunities, participated in meetings, wrote a grant for the release of state funds, invited officials to performances and helped draft the organization's annual state report. Outside her internship, Salas started a letter-writing campaign to Urban Outfitters Inc. to request removal of a shirt that is discriminatory

See Student News on page 6

## Visiting Madison this year?

Let us know — and we'll put you to work.

Talking with alumni about their careers and professional development experiences is one of the best ways La Follette School students can make the most of their time here.

If you're interested in meeting with students in a formal or informal setting to talk about your experiences, please contact Career Development Coordinator Mary Woodward, woodward@lafollette.wisc.edu, (608) 263-2409.

## La Follette School faculty, staff change

Staff changes have been taking place at the La Follette School.

**Mary Woodward** is now working full time in career development since **Mara Warner's** resignation. Woodward continues advising students about jobs and internships. She assists employers seeking applicants and wanting to visit with students. Woodward has more than 15 years of experience in domestic and international programs with the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Colorado, including projects in Southeast Asia.

**Kari Reynolds** has been promoted to academic department supervisor. She ensures that support is provided in overall operations, personnel administration, financial operations, staff supervision, instruction and facilities management.

**Bridget Pirsch**, a limited-term employee, was promoted to replace outreach specialist **Shirley Smith**, who is finishing a graphics degree at Madison Area Technical College and working at American Girl. Pirsch will assist outreach director **Terry Shelton** in planning speakers, conferences and workshops.

Student services assistant **Elizabeth Hassemmer** has moved on to take a position related to her graduate studies. The school is hiring her replacement.

Assistant professors **Donald Moynihan** and **Pamela Herd** joined the faculty this fall. Moynihan is teaching "Advanced Public Management" while Herd is teaching "Health and Health Policy."

Professor **Karen Holden** took over as associate director from **Melanie Manion** during the summer. Holden oversees student services, including recruitment, admissions, orientation, curriculum and graduation.



## Alumni sought to aid Career Development

Career Development Coordinator **Mary Woodward**, right, encourages alumni to contact her about internships and jobs for students and recent graduates, especially those in the international program. Reach her at [careerdevelopment@lafollette.wisc.edu](mailto:careerdevelopment@lafollette.wisc.edu) and (608) 263-2409.

Here, student **Rachel Howard**, talks with Woodward.

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to Latinos. The shirt reads, "New Mexico—Cleaner than Regular Mexico." "The shirt's slogan conjures up negative stereotypes of Mexico and Mexicans as 'dirty,'" Salas says.

**Laura Antuono** interned at the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C. She monitored the implementation and progress of government-funded anti-trafficking programs in the Western hemisphere. "I have observed how careful cooperation among U.S. government agencies as well as international diplomacy and negotiation between governments can lead to significant results in combating modern-day slavery," she says. "I learned quite a bit about government service, international programming and analysis (and of course, the nature of a bureaucracy)."

Several La Follette students worked for state agencies in Wisconsin. The Office of Wisconsin Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton employed **Brenda Mayrack** and **Jennifer Gulig Klippel** as interim policy directors. Their duties included traveling with Lawton to assist at events across the state, tracking policy issues and contributing research for public remarks. Mayrack has helped to plan a fall conference to encourage communities to invest in quality early childhood care and education to spur economic growth. Klippel assisted the Task Force on Women and Depression and the Study of Women and Corrections.

**Jamie Aulik** worked at the Wisconsin Senate's sergeant at arms, attending to the Joint Committee on Finance and general state of Wisconsin budget issues. He spent two weeks with the Army Reserve at extended combat training in Fort Gordon, Ga.

**John J. Vander Meer's** summer internship with the Wisconsin Department of Justice turned into a limited-term employment position as the communications and public policy coordinator. He writes news releases, crafts messages, organizes events and responds to media requests.

**Erin Rushmer** worked as an AmeriCorps VISTA associate in Madison, helping low-income 4- and 5-year-olds improve their literacy and math skills, and generally get ready for kindergarten. "It was incredibly rewarding," she says, "and it has offered me a firsthand look at education policy."

In the private sector, **Richard Barajas** worked at the Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua in Madison. He focused on microcredit work, which involves making very small loans to people who usually are poor and lack collateral.

**Mary Regan** worked on fund raising as a development assistant with the Atwood Community Center in Madison. She helped with the center's \$9 million capital campaign to purchase and renovate a former ironworks. Regan helped plan and manage the campaign, which included researching grants and foundations, working with software and putting together a calendar to manage deadlines, projects, meetings and tasks.

**Jenna Griffin** interned with Alliant Energy's Public Affairs Department, learning about the energy industry and campaign finance. "With Alliant's help, I have met several state and national level politicians (and a few La Follette alumni) at various legislative hearings, fund-raisers and conferences," she reports. "This internship supplements my classroom knowledge with firsthand exposure to the political process." ♦

# Working in private sector, grad values giving back to school

In some ways, Ron Luskin lives his interest in public affairs vicariously.

When the La Follette School alum graduated in 1979, he fell victim to the poor economy and high unemployment that made finding work in the public sector difficult.

So, Luskin, whose graduate studies focused on health-care policy and public information, turned back to the communications field and worked for newspapers and advertising agencies for 20 years. In 2003, he returned to Madison from Milwaukee to become vice president and director of marketing for Marshall Erdman & Associates, a national firm that specializes in the design and construction of health-care facilities.

"I never really worked in the public sector," says Luskin, who first worked in newspaper advertising sales when he received his bachelor's degree from UW-Madison in 1976, "but my whole life I have maintained an active interest in public affairs and politics."

He also has kept up an interest in the La Follette School by contributing money to support student activities, services and learning opportunities and to aid faculty and student recruitment. "I just had a wonderful



Ron Luskin

experience there," Luskin says, "and I believe it is important to give back."

Luskin keeps his hand in the public affairs arena by working on political campaigns, including those of U.S. senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold, plus others in Milwaukee.

He attended the La Follette School during its first incarnation as the Center for the Study of Public Policy and Administration. As one of the center's earlier students, he was largely able to craft his own academic program. His background in health-care policy informed his work in marketing communications advising the emerging health-maintenance organizations in the 1980s. His clients included HMOs and health insurance companies.

That background carries over to his position at Marshall Erdman, where he is working with La Follette School faculty to establish an internship.

Luskin still values what he learned during his La Follette School internship with the

state administrator of courts office when the system was being reorganized. "Even though the experience seemed to be far afield, it was a wonderful learning experience," Luskin says. "It gave me a great opportunity to explore the legislative process and judicial system."

Luskin encourages alumni to support the La Follette School financially, especially those who graduated before the state Legislature christened the La Follette Institute in 1984 to honor Robert M. La Follette. "I've seen La Follette grow, but it's always been a fledgling program, and it needs alumni help," Luskin notes.

"People further along in their careers could consider doing more," he says. "At a time when fewer resources are available from the state, more of us who have benefited from a public university need to step up to help their alma mater grow and flourish.

"Historically Wisconsin has been a leader and an incubator for programs that go on to become national models," Luskin adds. "When competition for resources is as intense as it is now, alumni need to contribute the resources public affairs faculty need to craft innovative policy suggestions and to educate tomorrow's policy makers." ♦

## Support La Follette School students and programs

Please join friends and alumni in supporting the La Follette School of Public Affairs. To make a gift online or to receive information about planned giving, go to [www.uwfoundation.wisc.edu](http://www.uwfoundation.wisc.edu).

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Enclosed is my/our gift of

\$50  \$100  \$250  \$500  Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please send this form and gift to the La Follette School of Public Affairs, 1225 Observatory Drive, Madison WI 53706.**

Information: [alumni@lafollette.wisc.edu](mailto:alumni@lafollette.wisc.edu) or

(608) 262-3581.

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governance of ocean fisheries, to teaching in France, Italy and the Czech Republic.

Three alumni played important roles in this fall's orientation that welcomed more than 50 first-year students. Katie Croake (MIPA class of 2003) Kirstin Nelson, (MIPA 2002) and Jason Bittner (MPA 2000) shared stories about their jobs since graduation and advised students how best to prepare in the two years ahead for careers in a world of changing job options and policy issues.

Croake is a senior policy analyst with the U.S. Agency for International Development. Before attending the La Follette School, she taught in Lebanon for an extended period. Nelson spent a couple of years as an analyst with the U.S. Government Accountability Office, then moved back to Wisconsin to become an individual income tax analyst with the

Wisconsin Department of Revenue. Bittner is the deputy director of the Midwest Regional University Transportation Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has been with the center since 1999.

I look forward to the two years the entering class will spend at the La Follette School of Public Affairs. I am excited about recruiting the class of 2008 and seeing the current second year become alumni of an ever-growing and stronger program. I value the role of alumni in encouraging applications, advising students, providing internships and giving financial support. If you are living in or visiting Madison, let us know if you would like to talk to students. The relationships students and faculty build with alumni are at the core of the training the La Follette School of Public Affairs provides to prepare policy analysts and decision-makers. ♦

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**Trisha Schmid**, 2004, is a legislative aide for Wisconsin Reps. **Spencer Black**, a 1981 alum, and Sondy Pope-Roberts.

As part of her post-graduation transition, **Ellen Wuennenberg**, 2005, spent a few weeks last summer in Las Vegas as a production assistant. "This show I did boring things like copying and typing as well as more fun things like taking directors notes and working with the talent and stage managers backstage," she says. In the fall she began interviewing for jobs in the Chicago area.

**Jennifer Schuh**, 2005, has accepted a position as assistant account executive/coordinator with Hill & Knowlton Chicago's public affairs group. An international public relations firm specializing in public affairs, Hill & Knowlton is the largest communications consultancy in the world. ♦

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