

## Letter from the Director

What is our ROE? No, that's not a typo.

Though "return on investment" is the popular phrase to use across business, government, nonprofit and academic sectors these days, in the Center for Public and Nonprofit Management (CPNM), we are concerned with the ROE — Return on Engagement. Through our research, service, and teaching via service learning, the CPNM is achieving impact.

This year, the CPNM has been operating on a model I like to capture using the dual purpose acronym SEE DEMOS. Through our work, we see the people, our communities, as our focus — community-engaged research, teaching and service. Translated, the acronym stands for Student Empowered Education and Democratizing Education for Members of Society. Our aim is to use our



resources within the university not only to provide exceptional education to our students but to help generate new knowledge in our communities, ultimately to strengthen those communities.

In this annual report, we focus on stories of how our research, teaching and service are achieving impact. The examples we provide are from the center's AmeriCorps VISTA project, research conducted with the Heart of Florida United Way, a study of public-private partnerships for the Florida Department of Transportation, and service-learning with the city of Orlando. We also profile Assistant Professor Qian Hu, who, in her second year on faculty, is demonstrating an ability to craft research projects with a significant ROE potential.

I welcome your ideas. Contact me at [thomas.bryer@ucf.edu](mailto:thomas.bryer@ucf.edu).

— Thomas A. Bryer, Ph.D.,  
CPNM Director

## Research Focus

The mission of the Center for Public and Nonprofit Management at the University of Central Florida is to strengthen communities through relevant research by faculty members and students and through capacity building services to public and nonprofit organizations.

### CORE RESEARCH AREAS IN 2013

- Collaborative Governance
- Democracy and Citizen Engagement
- Diversity and Inclusiveness
- Sustainability

The center's research areas will remain responsive to community needs through evaluation, scheduled review and periodic renewal.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service's AmeriCorps VISTA Program fights poverty with passion. The Center for Public and Nonprofit Management's AmeriCorps VISTA Project places Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) at the homeless education programs of two county school districts to build the programs' capacity.

Jade Willey is an elementary school student who had been part of the Seminole County Public Schools (SCPS) Families in Transition (FIT) program until recently. At one point, she was living out of a car and

getting ready for school in a Walmart bathroom. She often had to wear the same clothes multiple times a week. With more than 2,200 homeless students in Seminole County, the FIT program works to ensure that these students are in school and that their families have their basic needs met, promoting family stability and, subsequently, students' educational success.

At first glance, Alex Serrano is just like any high school senior. However, after speaking with him and learning his story, it is impossible not to be

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Jade Willey

Emily Bachman

## Community Service *(Continued)*

impressed and inspired by what he has achieved in the midst of adversity. Alex is one of 7,250 Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) students who have experienced homelessness this school year, and one of 253 of those students who are unaccompanied youth.

This school year, CPNM AmeriCorps VISTAs have helped the OCPS McKinney-Vento Program (MVP) and the SCPS FIT program better serve students like Alex and Jade by identifying resources in the community, recruiting volunteers, and using social media and new print media materials to spread awareness about homeless education.

Services provided by the MVP alleviated some of Alex's worries and stresses. Alex is on track to graduate from Oak Ridge at number 17 in his class with a 4.2 GPA, all accomplished while working a full-time job at McDonald's and living on his own. Through full-time service, AmeriCorps VISTAs work to strengthen the MVP so every student experiencing homelessness can walk across a stage like Alex will, with a high school diploma in hand and hope for a bright future.

CPNM AmeriCorps VISTAs at the FIT program had the opportunity to plan the first "Get Fit for FIT 5k" to benefit and raise awareness for FIT. Jade became interested in running and found that running helped her to be

more relaxed and even enabled her to be more focused in school. Today, Jade and her family have a home of their own. She is doing well in school, has been able to make some good friends in her new neighborhood and has even found a way to give back.

Recalls one VISTA, "Through these experiences, I am reminded of why the work we are doing is so important. The need continues to grow, and organizations addressing the issue of homelessness must be able to grow with it. It is my hope that our work, and the work of those who follow us, equips and enables Families in Transition to adapt and grow into an organization that is able to meet the increasing needs of the homeless students in Seminole County."



Alex Serrano



VISTA Sagirah Knight in the FIT pantry

Abi Bell

## Service-Learning Profile

Students in the spring 2013 M.P.A. Capstone class under CPNM Director Thomas Bryer completed a whole-class service-learning project with the city of Orlando. In teams, students interviewed city officials from several different offices and agencies to assess the readiness of the city to work with active and engaged citizens. They presented their findings and recommendations at City Hall.



M.P.A. Capstone students at City Hall

Janelle Lyons

## Research Colloquium Series

The annual Research Colloquium Series provides a forum for intellectual dialogue with prominent researchers on topics relevant to public affairs and administration. The series focuses on current topics in public administration and brings together community leaders, scholar and students. The 2012–13 series addressed the following topics:

**October 2, 2012 Personnel and Performance Management Applications for Rural-Based State Law Enforcement**, by Tonya T. Neaves, M.P.P.A., research fellow with the Social Science Research Center at Mississippi State University

**November 29, 2012 Field Study: Metropolitan Governance in Seoul, South Korea**, by Professor Naim Kapucu and study abroad students

**January 31, 2013 Cities of Service: A Grounded Theory Exploration of Volunteer Service**, by Brandy Hill, J.D., Ph.D. (UCF Public Affairs '13)

**February 28, 2013 ASPA Conference Presentations: Federal Policy Development + State Interpretation and Implementation = Injustice**, by Assistant Professor Brandi Blessett, and **Direct Observation of Climate-Related Narratives in Social Networks**, by Assistant Professor Claire Knox

**April 18, 2013 CPNM Research Fellows Presentations: System-wide Accountability or Systemic Barriers to Success**, by Amber Myers, M.P.A. student; **A Profile of Nonprofit Economic Development Organizations in Florida**, by M.P.A. student Charoy Thurston and undergraduate student Katherine Bucher; and **Explaining Variation in Voting Outcomes for Statewide Environmental Bonds: Does Access to Public Goods Make a Difference?** by M.S. in Urban and Regional Planning student Alex Deus and undergraduate student Jennifer Kempinski

## FEATURED PROGRAM

## Research

State and local governments are having difficulty finding the revenue to repair bridges and maintain roads and water treatment plants, as well as to build needed new ones. One solution is to partner with the private sector, leveraging new sources of funds as well as needed expertise. Wendell Lawther, associate professor of public administration, and Larry Martin, professor of public affairs, are leading a team of nine researchers to study transportation-related public-private partnerships (P3s) in a project funded by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Benefits of P3s include the following: 1) the bridge is repaired sooner or the roadway is built sooner, 2) private sector innovation is encouraged, and 3) funds are committed to operations and maintenance — often neglected in the past. However, state and local officials will encounter many challenges in creating P3s that must be dealt with effectively if P3s are to be successful. The recently passed House Bill 85 allows for Florida counties to enter into P3s for a wide range of infrastructure projects and for engaging services. “It is our hope that the results of our research will benefit state and local officials as they consider adopting P3s as a means of funding these efforts,” Lawther said.

P3s

## Researcher Profile

Qian Hu joined UCF's School of Public Administration as an assistant professor in 2011. Her research interests include collaborative public management, government–nonprofit relations, strategic and performance management, social media, and policy informatics. Her work has been published in academic journals such as *American Behavioral*



Abi Bell

Qian Hu, Ph.D.

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## Grants and Contracts, 2012–13

INVESTIGATORS	RESEARCH TITLE	AGENCY NAME	AMOUNT	TIME FRAME
Michael Abels, Ph.D. (PI), Rui Sun, Ph.D. (Co-PI)	Municipal Pension Plan Study	City of Cocoa Beach	\$5,400	8/1/12–5/1/13
Brandi Blessett, Ph.D. (PI)	Community Impact Data Analysis and Review	Heart of Florida United Way	\$12,000	2/15/13–12/31/14
Thomas Bryer, Ph.D. (PI); Brandi Blessett, Ph.D., Matthew Lavery, M.Ed. (Co-PIs)	Commissioner's Task Force on Inclusion and Accountability	Florida Department of Education, Office of the Commissioner	\$3,600	3/22/12–3/23/12
Thomas Bryer, Ph.D. (PI)	CPNM AmeriCorps VISTA Project	Corporation for National and Community Service	\$682,431 to volunteers	4/26/12–5/3/14
Thomas Bryer, Ph.D. (PI)	Interfaith School Turnaround Pilot Project in Orlando: Assessment	Heart of Florida United Way	\$6,000	10/9/11–10/9/12
Thomas Bryer, Ph.D. (PI)	Project Oasis	Hebni Nutrition Consultants	\$15,000	7/15/12–6/30/13
Thomas Bryer, Ph.D. (PI), Christopher Hawkins, Ph.D. (Co-PI)	Walking School Bus Administration and Evaluation	Florida Department of Transportation	\$250,000	12/6/12–12/5/14
Thomas Bryer, Ph.D. (PI)	Pine Hills Nutrition Study	UCF Foundation, Inc. with College of Health and Public Affairs, Community Foundation of Central Florida, and Second Harvest Food Bank	\$19,280	5/31/12–11/15/12
Qian Hu, Ph.D. (PI)	Building, Developing and Sustaining Local Economic Development Networks	UCF Office of Research and Commercialization	\$7,500	5/1/13–4/30/14
Naim Kapucu, Ph.D. (PI); Fernando Rivera, Ph.D., Christopher Hawkins, Ph.D. (Co-PIs)	Building Disaster Resilience and Sustainability in Rural Communities in Central Florida: Applications of Social Network Analysis	U.S. Department of Agriculture/ National Science Foundation/ Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service	\$387,557	9/15/10–12/31/12
Wendell Lawther, Ph.D. (PI); Lawrence Martin, Ph.D., Amir Behzadan, Ph.D. (Co-PIs)	Flexible and Rapid Decision Making Related to Public-Private Partnerships (P3) Funding Models in Transportation	Florida Department of Transportation	\$146,969	4/27/12–10/27/13



## Researcher Profile *(Continued)*

*Scientist, Research Policy, Journal of Community Informatics, Journal of Public Affairs Education and Journal of Nanoparticle Research.*

In 2013, Hu received both an in-house grant from the UCF Office of Research and Commercialization and a seed research grant from the Center for Public and Nonprofit Management.

The in-house grant is allowing Hu to examine roles that nonprofit economic development organizations play in the local economy and to further analyze collaboration between diverse organizations within local economic development networks in the Orlando metropolitan area.

The CPNM grant is enabling Hu to study the homeless service delivery networks in Seminole and Orange counties in Florida. She is identifying key organizations within homeless service delivery networks and examining the function and structure of homeless service delivery networks. A primary goal of her project is to help strengthen community partnerships, strategically allocate resources and better provide integrated homeless services.

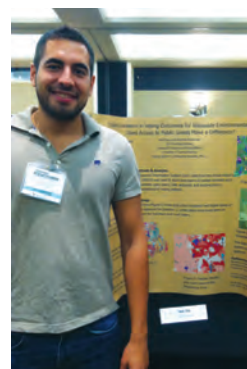
## Fellows Program

Each year, the Center for Public and Nonprofit Management offers undergraduate and graduate students an exciting opportunity to compete for positions in the CPNM's fellows program. Selection is based on academic merit and service. Fellows serve the university and community by conducting rigorous research. Identified below are the five outstanding students who were fellows in spring 2013.

**CPNM Fellow** – Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) student Amber Myers completed research with Assistant Professor Brandi Blessett and CPNM Director Thomas Bryer. They used a case-study method to investigate the effectiveness of a performance management system of a large nonprofit agency. The study investigated the alignment of goals and objectives between the data management system and funded partner agencies.

**Urban and Regional Planning Fellows** – Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning student Alex Deus and undergraduate student Jennifer Kempinski worked with Assistant Professor Christopher Hawkins. Their research endeavors included data

analysis to explain variation in voting outcomes for statewide environmental bonds and its correlation to access to public goods in the state of Rhode Island.



Christopher Hawkins

Alex Deus

**Nonprofit Management Fellows** – M.P.A. student Charoy Thurston and undergraduate Katherine Bucher conducted research with Assistant Professor Qian Hu to complete a profile of nonprofit economic development organizations in Florida.

### Contact us

For opportunities to partner with the CPNM, please call 407-823-3794 or send an email to [cpnm@ucf.edu](mailto:cpnm@ucf.edu).

Learn more about the CPNM at [www.cpnm.ucf.edu](http://www.cpnm.ucf.edu).

## CENTER FOR PUBLIC AND NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

**David Krepcho, Chair**, President/CEO, Second Harvest Food Bank

**Ray Larsen, Vice Chair** Director of Children's Community Services, Heart of Florida United Way

**Allie Braswell**, President/CEO, Central Florida Urban League

**Mark Brewer**, President/CEO, Community Foundation of Central Florida

**Liz Buckley**, Executive Director, FOCUS Orlando  
**James "Jim" Coffin**, Executive Director, Interfaith Council of Central Florida

**Patty DeYoung**, Assistant to the President for Special Projects, Heart of Florida United Way

**Marie-Jose Francois**, Executive Director/CEO, Center for Multicultural Wellness and Prevention

**Lydia Gardner**, Orange County Clerk of Courts (Deceased May 2013)

**Keith Gooden**, Development and Marketing Director, Center for Multicultural Wellness and Prevention

**Marcia Hope Goodwin**, Chief Service Officer, City of Orlando

**Dean Grandin Jr.**, Manager, City of Orlando Planning Division; Chair, Urban and Regional Planning Advisory Board, UCF

**Bruce Greer**, Executive Director, Community Foundation of South Lake

**Ann Hellmuth**, President, League of Women Voters of Orange County

**Thomas Holley**, Attorney, Law Offices of Thomas B. Holley, Esq.

**Joel Hunter**, Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

**Jon Ippel**, Sustainability Director, City of Orlando

**Ann Manley**, Executive Director and Secretary, Dr. Phillips Charities; Chair, Nonprofit Management Advisory Board, UCF



Courtesy of Orlando Science Center

Advisory Council member Lauren Nelson (second from left) and Star Wars' friends welcomed Director Thomas Bryer and Assistant Director Maria-Elena Augustin to the Orlando Science Center's Otronicon VIP Opening Event on Jan. 17, 2013.

**Lauren Nelson**, Director of Individual Giving, Orlando Science Center

**Kevin Sherin**, Director of Public Health, Orange County Health Department

**Max Stewart**, President/CEO, World Affairs Council of Central Florida

**John Tikanich**, Community Development Director, City of Cocoa/President, Florida Brownfields Assoc.

**Theresa "Terri" Walsh**, Professor and Program Manager of Accounting, Seminole State College

### Ex-Officio Members

**Maria-Elena Augustin**, Assistant Director, CPNM, UCF

**Thomas Bryer**, Director, CPNM; Associate Professor, School of Public Administration, UCF

**Millie Erichsen**, Director of Development, College of Health and Public Affairs, UCF

**Mary Ann Feldheim**, Director, School of Public Administration, UCF

**Barbara Howell**, Research Coordinator, College of Health and Public Affairs Office of Research, UCF

**Stephanie Loudermilk Krick**, Instructor, School of Public Administration; Director, Nonprofit Leadership Alliance, UCF

**Vanessa Littleton**, Instructor, School of Public Administration, UCF

**Jo Ann Smith**, Assistant Professor, School of Public Administration, UCF