

# VIEWS

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## FACING DISASTER

# Dean's Message

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Colorado residents have seen more than our share of disaster events this past year. And disasters and emergencies are occasions when the organizations we study most intensively in public affairs—government and nonprofits—come to the forefront. How these organizations perform is especially important during and just after these catastrophic events.

SPA Professor **Mary Guy** studies emotional labor in the realm of public service, and she notes that government emergency workers are there to assist citizens in “the worst hour of the worst day of the worst week of their lives.” Rarely was that more true than in Colorado during the wildfires and floods that plagued the state in 2013.

Many families lost their homes and all of their belongings, and most of the help they received came from government employees and workers from nonprofit organizations who had to hold their emotions in check while they rushed to provide assistance.

Our cover story focuses on the people who work in such emergency management situations. We are proud that many SPA alums, including Evans City Manager **Aden Hogan** and Larimer County Sheriff **Justin Smith**, played critical roles during these severe challenges, and we are even prouder of their abilities to harness resources quickly to help the victims.

Emergency management studies emphasize the cycle of preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. We try to learn from one event before the next one happens. SPA is also fortunate to have an Emergency Management and Homeland Security concentration in our MPA degree. Initiated by Professor **Lloyd Burton**, an expert on wildfire issues, and now run by Associate Professor **Brian Gerber**, an expert on disaster planning and recovery, our program trains students for jobs in this field.

SPA has also trained PhD students in homeland security and emergency management.

Most recently, **Dane Egli** (PhD '11) wrote his dissertation on maritime security issues, which he has turned into an important book,

*Beyond the Storms: Strengthening Homeland Security and Disaster Management to Achieve Resilience.* He is continuing his research at Johns Hopkins University.

Our nation has become more familiar with natural and human-caused disasters, especially since the term “homeland security” entered the wider lexicon after September 11, 2001. As we experience more of these events, first responders have become more appreciated for their critical response roles, especially as we observe numerous examples not only of their routine bravery, but also of their extraordinary courage.

This is an arena where both SPA's public administration side and our criminal justice side are important. We need smartly designed and well-implemented public policies to minimize the impacts of disasters, and we also need first responders who are trained to protect and assist victims under emergency conditions that are, by definition, nearly impossible to manage.

Since many of these events are inevitable and we cannot predict when and where they will happen, preparedness and mitigation are critical. We believe that these are areas in which smarter government decisions are essential so that the response and recovery to disasters can be as strong as possible.



**Paul Teske**  
Dean, School of Public Affairs



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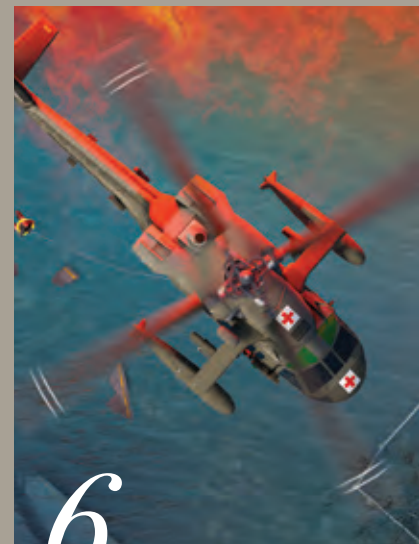
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# The Lure of An Adventurous Life

Chris Munson mulls a world of options

The career advice most people give Chris Munson is to narrow his focus, follow a clear path and make a hard choice. Then he looks at Jamie Van Leeuwen's job and he hesitates, determined to keep his options open.

Munson, who graduated in December, has been looking for a job in the nonprofit sector or in public policy. Or maybe both. He interned in Van Leeuwen's office last year and says he thinks Van Leeuwen has "the greatest job in the world."

Van Leeuwen (PhD '07) is deputy chief of staff for Gov. John Hickenlooper and executive director of the Global Livingston Institute, a nonprofit that works to improve the health and vitality of communities in East Africa. "Everybody tells me to focus my job search and be a little more specific, but I love both those aspects of public service, so it's hard for me to narrow it down," Munson says.

Since he finished his undergraduate degree in history at Baylor University, Munson has alternately worked in the public and nonprofit sectors. He did an internship with a small nongovernmental organization in Ethiopia, where he joined a group of people teaching rural villagers how to drill wells manually.

"We were out in the bush, living among the villagers," he says. The drilling rig was ingenious, using ropes, pulleys and old tires, and requiring no fossil fuels or heavy machinery.

"It was amazing technology," Munson says. His group taught the villagers how to use the rig, and they drilled four wells during his time there. Later, he went to work in the office of Texas Sen. Kel Seliger of Amarillo, where he helped develop legislation.

Munson came to the School of Public Affairs in August of 2011 and began working on an MPA with a nonprofit concentration. "I had grown up coming to Colorado on vacation, so when I was looking at MPA programs, the two most important things were that it be in a desirable, fun place and that it have a highly reputable degree," he says. "The School of Public Affairs was a good fit."

Then when he heard about the summer program offered in Uganda, he was thrilled. The day after the opportunity was announced, Munson enrolled. "There was not even a question in my mind," he says.

The group of students spent three and a half weeks in Uganda, where they did service learning projects with several nongovernmental organizations working around Kampala.

They also visited the U.S. embassy there and learned about diplomacy in

East Africa and the process of getting a job in the U.S. Foreign Service. They met former victims of the Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group in the northern part of the country. And they helped organize a women's leadership conference in southern Uganda.

When the program ended, Munson traveled to Rwanda to do research for his capstone on the nonprofit organization Bridge2Rwanda, which helps high-achieving students prepare for college and gain access to universities abroad.

"The goal is to get the students full scholarships to universities and then have them come back to Rwanda to be the country's future business and government leaders," he says.

The program has been successful, but there are many more eligible students than it can accommodate, so his capstone offered strategies for replicating Bridge2Rwanda and organizations like it.

Munson's next adventure will be in California. "I'm sad to leave Colorado, but my long-term girlfriend lives in Berkeley, so I'll be moving there," he says. In the meantime, he's still looking for that perfect job.

► From left, Opio Johnson, a student at Makerere University in Kampala, meets with MPA students Zhang Ke, Emily Reddick and Chris Munson.



## Student Notes



AMPA student **Nicholas Wharton** received a two-year paid internship through the Cathy Shipley Best and Brightest program. Wharton will serve as a city manager intern for the Town of Severance, Colorado.

Outstanding student awards were given to four students who graduated in December. **Chris Munson** and **Alexandra Solovieva** were named outstanding MPA graduates. **Patricia Woodin** was named outstanding MCJ graduate, and **Katlyn Love** received the award for outstanding BACJ graduate.

► AMPA student Nicholas Wharton, top;  
PhD candidate Mark Davis, right.

Second-year PhD student **Carrie Chapman** presented the paper “Small Acts and Broad Strokes: An Evaluation of the Empirical Study of Public Leadership” with **Jessica Sowa** at the Public Management Research Association Conference in Madison, Wisconsin.

PhD candidate **Mark Davis** has been given a Norton Long Young Scholars Award for 2013 from the American Political Science Association. The award is given to scholars who are completing or have completed their PhD within the last three years and submitted a paper proposal to the program chairs for the association’s annual meeting.



## A Sense of Place

*Greg Knott finds everything he needs on the Western Slope*

Greg Knott is poised to complete his MPA degree in May and has managed to do the whole program without ever having to leave the Western Slope. Knott, who is chief of police in Basalt, started at the School of Public Affairs Western Slope program in 2009 at Colorado Mesa University, which is also where he earned his undergraduate degree. “It’s been a long process,” he says, but he’s thrilled that he’s been able to work full time and keep up with the demands of his two children while getting his degree.

Even though he has no immediate plans to leave law enforcement, he says it’s been good for him to learn more about the wider field of public administration. “I wanted to see what others in municipal administration face and learn ways to assist them,” he says. “The MPA program has broadened my view and opened my eyes to the greater operations.”

He entered the law enforcement field through an unusual route: football. “I had some strong mentors in my coaches when I was younger,” he says. “I played football in high school and

college, and a lot of my coaches were police officers.”

When he finished high school, he was awarded a scholarship created to honor a fallen police officer from Montrose. He earned a degree in social and behavioral science with an emphasis in law enforcement and went to work for the Carbondale Police Department.

“I was hired as ordinance control officer—dog catcher,” he says with a laugh. He held positions of patrol officer, detective and senior sergeant over his 20-year career there. “I love the mountains and don’t ever see myself moving to the Front Range,” he says. “I also enjoy the type of law enforcement that occurs in smaller communities.” In places such as Basalt and Carbondale, where he was senior sergeant in the town police department before taking the job in Basalt last year, Knott says residents usually are on a first-name basis with local law enforcement officers. “There’s a lot of team building and collaboration with the citizens, and we work with other departments to solve problems at the local level,” he says.

For his capstone, Knott is doing a cost/benefit analysis of the Eagle County drug and DUI court. He’s working with an Eagle County court judge on the project.

Fred Ranguet, director of the Western Slope MPA program, was instrumental in encouraging Knott to apply. “He’s been a very big influence on me both in getting started in the program and helping me complete it,” Knott says.

Knott took most of his classes in traditional classrooms. “The online learning environment is not for me. I really enjoy the classroom setting and the friendships that you make. It’s been a great experience for me.”





# Inundated

Disasters keep Jo Donlin busy at Division of Insurance

First came the fires, then the floods and finally the health insurance exchange. For Jo Donlin (MPA '96), director of external affairs for the Colorado Division of Insurance, it's been a whirlwind couple of years.

"Our mission is consumer protection," Donlin says. "We want to make sure that the insurance carriers and their licensed agents follow all state laws and regulations, and that the companies remain solvent so they can pay the claims. We also help answer consumer questions and investigate their complaints to ensure they receive the benefits for which they pay."

So when the fires and floods occurred, the workload grew exponentially. Then the health exchange launched on October 1, and the workload exploded. Donlin says the agency actually has been working on implementation of the Affordable Care Act for three years.

"We regulate the whole health insurance market," she says, "not just the plans sold in our state exchange,

Connect for Health Colorado." The agency approves all the plans being sold, their benefit structures and premium rates, and has started an outreach effort to help educate consumers about the changes.

"We want them to make better decisions and be better prepared when they need insurance the most," Donlin says. One of the big challenges with the Affordable Care Act is to teach people who have never had health insurance how to use it. "We're saying to people, 'We can help you figure it out,'" she says. "We can also help you if your carrier doesn't meet your expectations. We recover millions of dollars for consumers each year."

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**"We want to make sure that the insurance carriers ... follow all state laws and regulations, and that the companies remain solvent so they can pay the claims."**

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The division is collaborating with several high-profile organizations to get the word out. It is working with the 9Health Fair, among other groups, to deliver its message to as large an audience as possible.

In addition to managing public outreach, Donlin is the agency's main contact with the Colorado Legislature. She develops and coordinates legislative initiatives and does policy research and analysis.

Donlin says she "caught the legislative bug" when she was at Colorado College as an undergraduate. She worked as an intern for the chairman of the Joint Appropriations Committee of the Wyoming Legislature and loved the work. "Boy, did it shape my future."



After graduation, she suffered a spinal cord injury and went home to recover. In 1993, she enrolled in the MPA program at the School of Public Affairs. "I really enjoyed my classes in ethics and the policy process," she says. In 2008, she was hired for her current job at the Division of Insurance.

Donlin, who has been a quadriplegic and used a motorized wheelchair since her injury in 1990, says it "gives me a different lens through which I view the world." For one thing, she says she understands the importance of having access to health insurance. "At 19, 20, 21, you think you're invincible. I know I did. But I had health insurance, and thank goodness I did."

Donlin says her injury has created plenty of challenges along the way, but it also has given her a heightened awareness of the importance of community service. "I really do think that giving back to the people who have helped me so much is important."

Donlin is a member of the School of Public Affairs Advisory Board and is active in her church's health and wellness ministry. She also has served on the board of Craig Hospital and continues to volunteer in various capacities.

"A lot of people in my physical condition don't have the opportunities I've had. I've worked extremely hard to make things happen, and I'm thrilled I've been able to do it," she says. "I'm really blessed."



# Outside the Comfort Zone

Deirdre Maloney teaches the skills for success

**D**eirdre Maloney (MPA '95) credits some of her success to going after what she wanted, some to working hard and a whole lot more to making mistakes. Those are just a few of the skills she teaches organizations to value in her work with nonprofits, businesses and boards of directors to help them become more effective.

Maloney is president of Momentum, which offers leadership training, facilitation services and presentations to clients ranging from the Chicano Federation and the Jewish Community Foundation to the Asian Business Association of San Diego and Conservation Colorado.

"The path to where I am now has been circuitous," she says. At 40, she's already had three careers. She graduated from the State University of New York at Oswego determined to be in broadcast news.

"My first job was with the ABC affiliate in upstate New York, working 3 to 8:30 a.m. for \$5 an hour," Maloney says. "You know those names on the screen when people are talking? Somebody had to type them in in those days. That was me."

She moved up through the ranks and later was asked to work on the assignment desk, a job she knew she would hate. "I was just a pup. I told them I really want to be a producer eventually," so she said she'd take the assignment desk job if she could shadow a producer one day a week to learn the ropes. Her boss agreed to the

arrangement and, three weeks later, when the producer she was shadowing quit, she got the job she really wanted.

She moved to Denver in 1999 and decided to leave journalism and get involved in the nonprofit sector. "I literally went through the list of nonprofits in Denver, starting at A until I got to C," she says.

She contacted the Colorado AIDS Project and spoke to a staff member on the phone. "She said, 'I'm leaving. Want the job?'" Maloney started as marketing associate and a year and a half later, when the executive director position opened up, Maloney got the job. She was 28.

"I learned a lot by making a ton of mistakes," she says. "It was an incredibly wonderful, stressful experience," she says. "After I finished, I knew why lots of EDs only do it once."

It was during her time at Colorado AIDS Project that she earned her MPA. "I fell so in love with public policy and legislation that I started a pretty formalized advocacy program within the Colorado AIDS Project while I was there," she says. "I wouldn't have done that without going to CU Denver and taking the classes I had to take."

Maloney left Colorado AIDS Project when she and her husband moved to San Diego in 2008. Several people contacted her, seeking advice and asking her to recommend a book on how to run a nonprofit.

"The books around then were all so academic," she says. "They weren't especially

experiential or empathetic." So she decided to write the book she would have liked to have had herself when she was learning the ropes as an executive director.

"It was basically: 'The job of an ED is lonely and hard. Do these 10 things and save yourself.'" The result was *The Mission Myth: How to Build Nonprofit Momentum through Better Business*, as well as the creation of her company.

"I never do any project halfway. When I'm in, I'm all in," she says, and that means she makes time to travel, learn new things and enjoy her husband and her friends.

Among the many lessons she's learned over the years, No. 1 is to give herself the freedom to fail. "I think one of our big mistakes is that we're always striving for perfection, so a lot of us avoid risk," she says. "We're so paralyzingly afraid of failure."



## Active Alumni

Brandy Reitter



**Brandy Reitter** (MPA '08) has been named town administrator for Buena Vista. She was featured recently in the Chaffee County Times.

**André Corrêa d'Almeida** (PhD '10), adjunct associate professor at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University, has created the new Development Practice Lab to give public affairs students hands-on learning opportunities.

**Mark Goldfarb** (MPA '13) has accepted an accounting position with the global nonprofit Water for People.


**Daniel Hutton** (MPA '13) has been selected for a position as management analyst for the City of Centennial.

**Spiros Protopsaltis** (PhD '08) has joined the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development in the U.S. Department of Education.



### Got news?

Please send us details about your achievements so that we can include them in *Views from the West* and on our website, [www.spa.ucdenver.edu](http://www.spa.ucdenver.edu). You can email us at [SPA.alumni@ucdenver.edu](mailto:SPA.alumni@ucdenver.edu).



# FACING DISASTER



In the universe of disaster management, where experts pore over data from Katrina, Sandy and 9/11, Colorado has always been considered a fairly sleepy outpost. The chance for hurricanes, after all, is nil, and there's not much in the way of earthquake danger or likely terrorist attack either.



**S**ure, there are tornadoes, snowstorms, fires, floods and mass shootings, but statistically Colorado has always been considered an area with a relatively low vulnerability to large-scale disasters, says Associate Professor Brian Gerber, director of the Emergency Management and Homeland Security concentration at the School of Public Affairs.

Then came 2013, when wildfires and floods tested the mettle of emergency managers from cities as large as Boulder and Colorado Springs to those serving towns as tiny as Milliken and Glen Haven. Suddenly things got interesting. Too interesting.

Dan Pfannenstiel, assistant fire chief for the West Metro Fire Protection District and a student in the Executive MPA program, says agencies across the region were called upon to respond to the wildfires and floods last year.

Twelve major wildfires erupted during the hot, dry summer, including the devastating Black Forest fire in Colorado Springs, which consumed more than 14,000 acres, destroyed 511 homes and claimed two lives.

"We were involved in the fires in Colorado Springs, staffing local fire stations and sending brush trucks and wildland firefighters to assist," Pfannenstiel says. "We also sent staffers to be part of the incident command teams." The statewide mutual aid agreement means that no local area is on its own in a disaster and every district needs training to respond effectively.

Evans City Manager Aden Hogan Jr. (MPA '02) thought he'd done his time in the vortex of uncontrollable events when he was assistant city manager in Oklahoma City at the time of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in 1995. But when the rains came last September and floodwaters breached the levees along the South Platte River, suddenly he was thrust back into high-alert emergency management

mode. It wasn't exactly second nature to him, but he knew what to do.

"The best way for me to put it," says Hogan, "is that the things a public administrator would have to do in this kind of crisis are in my wheelhouse." Hogan immediately began monitoring upstream forecasts and the water levels of the South Platte, especially through the low-lying areas in town. On September 13, he and Evans Fire Protection District Chief Warren Jones organized an incident command post to coordinate the response.

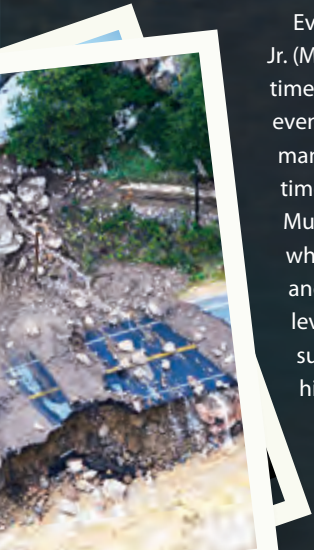
"Over the last seven years since I've been here," Hogan says, "we've paid special attention to emergency management and everyone has had basic incident command training." Supervisors received higher-level training, but, he says, at every level "we have folks who understand the process," so mobilizing the response occurred quickly.

"By Saturday morning, it was pretty clear to the fire chief and me that the event would go well beyond the resources we had," he says. "We asked the state if it would send a Type 3 incident command team to help us."

Originally created to respond to wildfires, incident command teams are groups of highly trained professionals who help coordinate local responders to minimize the loss of life and property damage in disaster situations. They are ranked from Type 1 teams for the largest and most complex situations to Type 5 teams for smaller-scale disasters in villages or townships.

On Sunday, Hogan says, the team arrived. "They said it was their dream assignment because taking over from us was like taking over from another Type 3 team. It was one of the highest compliments we could have been paid."

North of Evans, conditions were just as bad, and Larimer County Sheriff Justin Smith (MCJ '03) was worried. The burn scar from the disastrous High Park fire in Poudre Canyon in 2012 was vulnerable, and as the rains intensified, he headed out with a team to tour the area to evaluate the risk of mud slides.



*Continued on next page*

"We kind of knew what was coming," Smith says. The county receives weather forecasts for localized areas, and the slow-moving storm had already started delivering the deluge on September 11. Smith's pager was buzzing with calls from deputies across the county, so he went back to his office that night and began establishing an emergency response center.

As the hours elapsed, the disaster exploded. A deputy trying to help residents in Big Elk Meadows was trapped when the road washed out behind him. Phone systems were knocked out, highways were flooded and neighborhoods were isolated, and rumors of even worse catastrophes raced across the region.

Smith and his staff brought sleeping bags to the office to grab naps as they worked 'round the clock. "On Thursday night we were watching the forecast and saw outrageous water levels predicted to come down both the Poudre and the Big Thompson Rivers," he says. On Friday

morning, the actual numbers came in on the water levels "and they were 50 percent higher than forecast."

As soon as he got clearance to fly, Smith went by helicopter to tour the county to see conditions for himself. "I'm no engineer," he says, but it was clear the rumors of compromised dams were false. "Part of our job was to try to calm things down," he says. The other part was to save lives, and there they faced an enormous workload.

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**"A good recovery model not only returns people to their pre-disaster state, but improves the community's long-term resilience and creates less-vulnerable human systems."**

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A Type 2 incident command team arrived to coordinate the response. Crews composed of sheriffs' deputies and search and rescue teams were dropped in to survey for injured residents and gather those stranded for evacuation by helicopter. Hotshot crews that usually work on fire lines were also airlifted into the isolated communities to build egress routes so residents could escape areas that were isolated when highways were damaged by the floods.

Communications and coordination are major challenges facing managers in any emergency or disaster, according to Gerber. "Disasters by definition complicate your ability to do that work," he says. "Essentially, we ask public agencies to do a set

of extraordinarily challenging tasks – often with very limited resources."

Despite that, Smith says coordination of the various agencies and response teams worked remarkably well during the flood. "It's a challenge, but we had very little problem with it," he says. "It requires competence, good relationships and checking egos at the door." The bigger challenge, the experts agree, comes in the aftermath.

"Recovery is the hardest phase of any event," says Hogan, who had to coordinate reopening the inundated wastewater management system to the community on top of all the other problems in the aftermath in Evans.

"When the treatment plant quit, we were under a no-flush order," he says. "We brought in hundreds of portable toilets." More than 8,000 residents were affected, and original estimates were that it would take 10 days or longer to get the system operating again. "But with some very creative ingenuity and help from Greeley, we were able to divert some wastewater to Greeley and lift the no-flush order in eight days," Hogan says. The system was repaired and fully operational by the end of October.

Recovery can take years. Roads must be rebuilt, homes and businesses reconstructed and livelihoods restored. And while disasters do not discriminate, their impacts often are far more severe for vulnerable populations.

"Those who are able do build back," Gerber explains. "For them, recovery is not a long-term problem. But for groups on the margins, the working poor who live from paycheck to paycheck, recovery can take many years. It's not just about repairing a physical structure, but getting people back to sustainability." Hogan says that is the case for people from the



► Larimer County Sheriff Justin Smith





older neighborhoods in Evans. “Floods are the worst,” he says. “They destroy everything they touch, and it’s a huge cleanup on that side of town.”

Residents have been dispersed to live with family members or friends. Children are going to different schools. Jobs have been lost. “Our No. 1 priority is to bring every resource we can to the table to help folks who were displaced,” Hogan says. “Many residents lost everything they had.” It will take time and significant investment, but “knitting the community back together is a critical component of any recovery.”

Hogan uses case studies from his personal experience in his work as an instructor at the School of Public Affairs. For the past 10 years, he has taught local government management, leadership and professional ethics, and disaster and emergency management.

“They get much more out of seeing what happened in real-life situations, even though the response might not have been perfect,” he says. “They can take it apart and see what we did well and what

could have been done differently. It’s a great springboard for learning.”

Gerber says the whole field of emergency management research and education is “heavily laden” with case studies. “There’s been real evolution in this field in the U.S.,” he says. “After 9/11 and Katrina, the U.S. has become very good at responding to large-scale incidents.”

Smith points to Larimer County as an example of that evolution. When the Big Thompson River flooded in 1976, 143 lives were lost. In September, when both the Big Thompson and the Poudre flooded, two people died. Although any loss of life is a tragedy, Smith says he is proud of his team for keeping the toll as low as it was.

Across the country, Gerber says, the pressure is on to improve recovery and disaster mitigation practices, but communities seldom embrace the complicated and expensive efforts required. “A good recovery model not only returns people to their pre-disaster state, but improves the community’s long-term resilience and creates less-

vulnerable human systems,” he says.

But the public investment required to achieve that model is significant, and things such as changing zoning laws to limit redevelopment in vulnerable areas and enforcing stricter building standards are often tough public policies to enact.

Unlike the first response to disasters, where communities overwhelmingly pull together and cooperate unselfconsciously, “recovery is politically contentious,” says Gerber.

When it comes to generating public funds for rebuilding projects or imposing limits on the rights of property owners to redevelop as they see fit, old conflicts often arise. All the good will that was generated at the height of the emergency can go up in smoke—or down the drain—in an instant.

Faculty members, students and alumni from the School of Public Affairs are dedicated to rebuilding not just the infrastructure of the communities that have faced disaster but the spirit that makes them strong, vibrant and resilient in the years to come.



“Our No. 1 priority is to bring every resource we can to the table to help folks who were displaced. Many residents lost everything they had ... Knitting the community back together is a critical component of any recovery.” *Evans City Manager Aden Hogan Jr.*



# Loving the Mountains to Death

**Lloyd Burton studies the dangers of developing the wildland-urban interface**

Every time a wildfire races through a neighborhood that used to be a pristine Colorado forest, Professor Lloyd Burton experiences a sickening combination of professional validation and deep sadness. The lives lost, homes destroyed and families uprooted too often were predictable outcomes of development in the wildland-urban interface. He and his students have researched and written about it for years.

In the spring of 2012, Burton spent a sabbatical in Australia and Spain studying the policy reforms that followed extreme wildfire seasons in those two countries. He returned and expanded the research to look at legislation that followed severe fire seasons in California, Oregon, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado.

“We found significant variation in the degree to which people are willing to use the power of the state to mitigate wildfire risk on private lands,” he says.

The laws in the United States fall into three categories: the local option model employed by Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico, which allows counties and municipalities to set their own standards; the common

standards model as found in California and Oregon, where the state sets uniform standards; and the hybrid model states of Nevada and Utah, which have voluntary statewide standards.

Although some so-called mega-fires can’t be stopped, Burton says there are a number of proven methods for mitigating the risk for those who live in the wildland-urban interface, or WUI (pronounced “woo-ee”).

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“The mountain forests of the American West want to catch fire. Their survival depends on it.”

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Structural mitigation, such as using nonflammable building materials, and creating a defensible space by removing trees, brush and flammable materials around buildings have shown to be effective means of saving structures and slowing the spread of wildfires.

“These are proven techniques to lessen the likelihood of losing structures to fire,” Burton says. “The fire science isn’t in question.” In California and Oregon, high-country residents are required to do fire mitigation according to common standards and state authorities are empowered to enforce the standards. Often this work is delegated to local authorities.

“The local-option states made different choices,” he says. “Ultimately they were more concerned about protecting property rights than about the lives of people in the WUI.” One of the local-option states is Arizona, where 19 hotshots died fighting the Yarnell Hill wildfire last summer.

“We’re not looking at the human costs,” he says. “The 19 firefighters in Arizona died trying to save structures, not the forest resources they were trained to protect.” When people

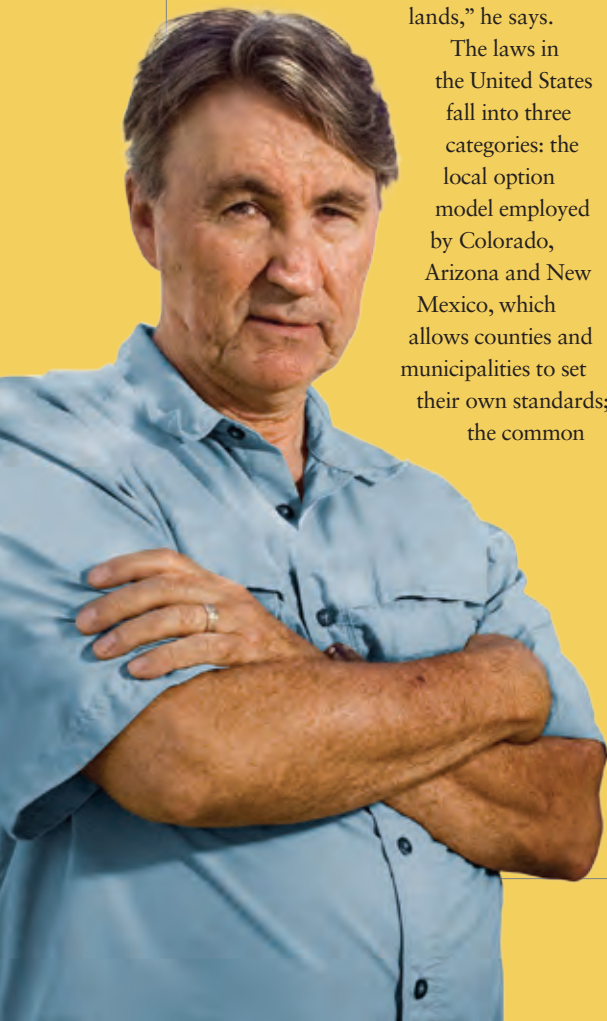
choose to move into harm’s way, whether it’s along the hurricane-prone Gulf Coast or the fire-prone mountain West, “they should do so fully aware of the risks and ready to accept the consequences,” Burton says. “We shouldn’t expect wildland firefighters to risk their lives trying to save properties that homeowners took no steps to protect against wildfire.”

At the very least, he says, property owners should be required to mitigate the risk for the sake of their neighbors’ homes as well as their own. “We can’t afford to offer that kind of fire protection. It’s completely unsustainable.”

The reality, Burton says, is that “the mountain forests of the American West want to catch fire. Their survival depends on it. The complete suppression of fire for decades has been a tragic error of forest management and has led to fires now quickly turning into mega-fires with extremely high temperatures that sterilize the soils and delay revegetation for decades.”

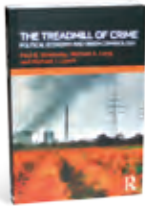
Still, development in the WUI continues apace, and states and local communities struggle with the challenge of balancing the rights of individual property owners with the cost in lives, property and public funds needed to protect mountain homes. Fundamentally, it’s a matter of values, the eternal western debate over consumption versus conservation.

“All of us who live in the mountain West really need to start having a more serious conversation than we’ve had in the past about the future of the mountains themselves,” Burton says. “For decades, we’ve sliced and diced them, privatized them, developed them and populated them. We’ve literally consumed the forested mountains of the West for profit. And the fires keep coming. Climate change, drought and a century of forest mismanagement will see to that.”



# In Print

1



Professor **Paul B. Stretesky** collaborated with **Michael A. Long** and **Michael J. Lynch** on "The Treadmill of Crime: Political Economy and Green Criminology,"

published by *Routledge*. He co-authored "Is it a Crime to Produce Ecological Disorganization? Why Green Criminology and Political Economy Matter in the Analysis of Global Ecological Harms" with **Long, Lynch** and **Kimberly L. Barrett** for the *British Journal of Criminology*. He also wrote "Camouflage-Collar Crime: An Examination of Wildlife Crime and Characteristics of Offenders in Florida" with **Matthew S. Crow** and **Tara O'Connor Shelley** for the journal *Deviant Behavior*.

2



Associate Professor **Tanya Heikkila** co-wrote "The Effective Public Manager: Achieving Success in Government Organizations," Fifth

Edition, with **Steven Cohen** and **William Eimicke**, published by *Jossey-Bass*. **Heikkila** also wrote "Building a Conceptual Approach to Collective Learning: Lessons for Public Policy Scholars" with **Andrea Gerlak** for the *Policy Studies Journal*.

3

Associate Professor **Christine Martell** wrote "Impact of Unfunded Pension Obligations on Credit Quality of State Governments" for *Public Budgeting and Finance* with **Sharon Kioko** and **Tima Moldogaziev**.

4

Professor **Mary Dodge** co-authored "Do Men and Women Perceive White-Collar and Street Crime Differently? Exploring Gender Differences in the Perception of Seriousness, Motives, and Punishment" with **Stacey J. Bosick** and **Victoria Van Antwerp**. It was published in the *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*. She also wrote "An Exploration of Crime by Policewomen" with **Philip M. Stinson** and **Natalie E. Todak** for *Police Practice and Research: An International Journal*.

5

Assistant Professor **Danielle M. Varda** co-wrote "Implications of Network Structure on Public Health Collaboratives," published

in the *Journal of Health Education and Behavior*, with **Jessica H. Retrum** and **Carrie Chapman**. She also wrote "A Patient-Centered Approach for Evaluating Public Health Roles within Systems of Care for Children with Special Healthcare Needs" with **Ayelet Talmi**. It was published in *Frontiers in Public Health Services and Systems Research*.

6

Professor **Mary Guy** co-wrote "One More Time: What Did Woodrow Wilson Really Mean about Politics and Administration?" with **Sean McCandless**. It was published in *Administrative Theory and Praxis*. She wrote "Why Emotion Skills Are Important" for *Training and Development Fashion*, a journal for Taiwan training and development professionals, produced by the National Academy of Civil Service, Taipei, Taiwan. **Guy** also co-wrote "Managing Emotions While Managing Crises" with **Meredith A. Newman** and **Nazife Ganapati**. It was published in the *International Journal of Emergency Services*.

7

Professor **Angela Gover** co-authored "A Critical Examination of the Causal Link between Child Abuse and Adult Dating Violence Perpetration and Victimization from a Propensity Score Matching Approach" with **Wesley G. Jennings**, **Tara N. Richards**, **Elizabeth A. Tomsich** and **Rachael A. Powers**. It was published in *Women and Criminal Justice*. **Gover** joined **Courtney Welton-Mitchell**, **Joanne Belknap** and **Anne Deprince** in writing "When Abuse Happens Again: Women's Reasons for Not Reporting New Incidents of Intimate Partner Abuse to Law Enforcement" for the same journal. She also co-wrote "A Longitudinal Examination of Offending and Specialization among a Sample of Massachusetts Domestic Violence Offenders" with **Richards**, **Jennings** and **Tomsich** for the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.

8

Research Professor **Stephen Block** co-wrote "Women and Men as Board Chairpersons: Their Acceptance/Rejection of Eighteen Expectations Described in the Nonprofit Literature" with **Steven A. Rosenberg**. It was published in the *Journal of Nonprofit Management*. He also joined **Rosenberg**, **Yvonne Kellar-Guenther** and **Cordelia C. Robinson** in writing "Parent Involvement in Early Intervention:

## HONORS & AWARDS



Holly Yettick

The article "The Academic Achievement of College Prep Students with Career Majors," co-authored by **Holly Yettick**, postdoctoral fellow at the Buechner Institute for Governance, was selected for the Best Article of the Year Award by the *Journal of Career and Technical Education*.

*Solutions* reporter **Katie Kerwin McCrimmon** was named Media Representative of the Year by the Colorado Healthcare Communicators. Since the 1970s, Colorado Healthcare Communicators has honored communications professionals across the state. Every year members nominate a representative of the news media who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to health care reporting.

Associate Professor **Callie Rennison** served as a member of a National Academy of Sciences committee that released a major report on human trafficking. Dean Richard Krugman of the CU Medical School was a co-chair of the committee.

What Role Does Setting Play?" for *Early Years: An International Research Journal*.

9

Assistant Professor **Todd Ely** collaborated with **Thad Calabrese** on "Pension Obligation Bonds and Government Spending" for the journal *Public Budgeting and Finance*.



# Teaching, Learning & Building

## MARK SAFTY MAKES HIS MARK AS WIRTH CHAIR

When Mark Safty accepted the appointment to be the Wirth Chair last summer, he decided to reacquaint himself with the whole concept of sustainability. This was not because he was unfamiliar with the topic. Far from it.

Safty, a partner at Holland & Hart, has spent more than 30 years working internationally in the field of energy development, power generation, regulation and finance. He has taught at the law schools of the University of Colorado and the University of Denver, and will teach at the School of Public Affairs next fall. And he is a frequent speaker at forums across the United States and around the world.

Still, he was humbled by the prospect of holding the Wirth Chair in Environmental and Community Development Policy, and was determined to approach the position thoughtfully. "In its broadest form, sustainability is an ideology of

sorts, and at some very important level it's also an ethical ideal," Safty says. It involves elements of economics, technology, cultural awareness and social justice, and its meaning is constantly evolving.

The overwhelming conclusion he reached is that the quest to achieve sustainability requires navigating an extremely complex international social, political, economic and ethical environment. "Teaching and learning is the only reasonable response to working with a complex set of issues in an increasingly complicated world," he says, which is how he envisions his role as Wirth Chair.

"The core of the Wirth Chair should be about teaching and learning. And then we have to build collaboration around the many, many businesses and organizations around the world."

Safty is the fourth person to hold the Wirth Chair since it was established in 1993. He succeeds Alice Madden, who left the position last year to take a job as deputy assistant secretary of intergovernmental affairs and external relations for the U.S. Department of Energy.

One of his first goals is to recruit a group of key business executives and academic leaders from across Colorado to travel to Denmark next spring to tour the sustainable communities there and visit a zero-emissions industrial park outside of Copenhagen. "There's no substitute for seeing it when it comes to igniting new thinking."

In addition, he wants to focus on K-12 education to determine how schoolchildren are learning about sustainability, whether it is in the context of science, social studies, business or geography—or if it is being taught at all.

"It's important, and it's important for children to learn about this at an early age," he says.

Safty plans to continue the Wirth Chair's Sustainability Series of monthly forums. "I don't think there's any limit to the number of areas where we can be effective," he says. Safty will continue practicing law while serving as Wirth Chair. To assist him, the school hired Jennifer Kagan (MPA '13) to coordinate activities, conduct research and develop programs.

Although he doesn't minimize the challenges the world faces in confronting climate change and diminishing resources, Safty says he's "guardedly optimistic" about our ability to address them.

Having grown up on a farm in Montana, Safty instinctively understands the elemental balance of nature and can imagine how it likely will play out on a grand scale. "We're about to reach or exceed the carrying capacity of the planet, so we have to moderate the rate of growth of the population," he says. "There's only one way to do that, and that's to eradicate poverty."

By reducing poverty and working to advance technological solutions to improve sustainability, "we can flatten the population growth and create the means to support it. If we don't do that, it's over."

Not long after he accepted the job, Safty met with former U.S. Sen. Timothy Wirth, who urged him to put his personal stamp on it. "Now I'm busy doing lunches, breakfasts, coffees with anybody who wants to talk about it," he says. "There really aren't any rules for this."

Safty, who had planned to scale back his law practice and explore new challenges at this point, now finds himself working long hours, juggling two demanding jobs and racing to keep up with a whirlwind of new opportunities, ideas and technologies. And, he says, "I've never been so happy in my life."



# Health News Colorado Unveiled

The Solutions health policy journalism website celebrates its third anniversary this year with a new name and a new look.

Health News Colorado continues the award-winning health journalism of Solutions with the same staff and the same commitment to independent in-depth reporting at its new address: [www.healthnewscolorado.org](http://www.healthnewscolorado.org).

Editor Diane Carman and Senior Writer Katie Kerwin McCrimmon produce health news stories each week, and experts from across the state provide opinion pieces for the independent nonprofit online news site, which is funded by private foundations and hosted by the School of Public Affairs.

“We want to attract new readers and help occasional readers more easily identify the site with a name that explicitly identifies our mission,” Carman says. “The new design also

reflects much of what we’ve learned about how readers navigate online news sites, which are rapidly taking the place of printed publications across the country.”

McCrimmon was named Media Representative of 2013 by the Colorado Healthcare Communicators for her outstanding commitment to health reporting.

Over the past year, McCrimmon has doggedly covered the development of the health insurance exchange, Connect for Health Colorado, which is transforming the health care system in the state. She also has brought a human face to such complex health challenges as so-called hotspotting experiments to control costs and improve care for frequent visitors to emergency rooms, and the reasons for the

wildly varying costs for common surgical procedures.

Readers may sign up for a free subscription to the Health News Colorado email newsletter or access the stories directly from the site. News organizations across the state and the country also share Health News Colorado stories with their readers.



## Will Power

Denver would not be the same without Philip Milstein.



Remembered as the “father of Denver’s 16th Street Mall,” Philip Milstein was also the visionary force behind the Skyline urban renewal project and the Platte River and Cherry Creek greenways.

Milstein also saw the potential for a depressed area in central Denver to become the Auraria campus—home to the University of Colorado Denver, where Milstein, a lifelong learner, earned his master’s degree at age 65, and his PhD at age 82 before passing away in 1993.

That year, Elisabeth Milstein funded a fellowship in the School of Public Affairs to honor her husband’s memory. Now, with a bequest in her will, she is ensuring it will continue in perpetuity.

To learn about other planned giving options, or to get a free guide to preparing a will or trust, contact **Gift Planning** at [giftplanning@cu.edu](mailto:giftplanning@cu.edu) or call **303.541.1335**. Visit us online at [www.cufund.org/planned-giving](http://www.cufund.org/planned-giving).



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#### ABOUT THE COVER

*In a year when disasters swept many parts of Colorado, alumni of the School of Public Affairs played critical roles in management and recovery efforts.*

*Illustration by Brian Leister.*

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#### Join us for an event

SPA and the CU Denver Alumni Association sponsor a full schedule of events for alumni, the campus and the community. In the past few months, SPA has hosted career panels, lectures, issues forums and high-profile speaking events. We promote these events through our website, [www.spa.ucdenver.edu](http://www.spa.ucdenver.edu); our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/schoolofpublicaffairs](http://www.facebook.com/schoolofpublicaffairs); and in emails to alumni.

To receive notifications of events, new programs and other opportunities, update your email address and your mailing address at [www.ucdenver.edu/alumniupdate](http://www.ucdenver.edu/alumniupdate).

#### Health News Colorado

Formerly Solutions, the Health News Colorado website covers health policy across the Rocky Mountain region with in-depth stories and opinions from a wide array of experts. Sign up for a free email subscription at [www.healthnewscolorado.org](http://www.healthnewscolorado.org).

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