Lessons from Katrina

An essay by Larry S. Luton, EWU MPA Director *

The impacts of Hurricane Katrina have included many potential lessons for public administrators, but the larger lessons are for all of those involved in steering public policy toward minimalist government. We get what we are willing to pay for.

If we consider it more important to reduce tax rates than to build levees that can withstand a category 5 hurricane, the result will be that the levees will break. If Congress authorizes the building of better levees but does not provide funds for their construction, they will not be constructed.

If the federal government requires local governments to prepare emergency evacuation plans, but accepts inadequate plans, then the plans will not work. Allowing local governments to submit plans that say, in effect, everyone and their neighbors will help each other find a way to evacuate, means that some people will not be able to evacuate. Allowing nursing homes to submit plans which depend on a private bus company that has signed more contracts than it can fulfill, means that some of our most vulnerable neighbors will be left with no bus to evacuate them.

If the facilities to which people who did not evacuate can go when their houses are destroyed or flooded are also without power and/or water, then the people in those facilities are going to be in very unpleasant, perhaps very unsafe conditions. No matter how hard those running those facilities work, no matter how experienced they are, no matter how much expertise they have, the facilities will remain substandard.

Certainly some of the stories arising from Katrina indicate that persons and institutions we counted upon to respond to the emergency failed to meet our expectations. Michael Brown probably should not have been appointed head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Someone with more experience in emergency management must have been available.

But it does not matter how talented and responsive our public administrators are if their organizations have been
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under-funded and under-resourced for years prior to the day of their greatest challenge. If the American people and our elected officials insist on shrinking the role of governmental institutions in providing public and social services, then they should not be shocked to find out that those working in governmental institutions are unable to prevent or adequately respond to large disasters.

If you voted for candidates who promised to reduce taxes, to reduce the size of government, do more with less, etc., then you should look in the mirror when you are looking for someone to hold responsible for the embarrassing way we re-

Where Are They Now?
Alumni Updates

Kendra Hensley

Kendra Hensley started the MPA program in 1993 and finished in 1995. Since graduation from EWU she has been gainfully employed by the State of Washington in various positions. Her MPA allowed her to register on a college-career graduate list, which was how she got her first position. It also gave her the skills she needed to move quickly into Washington Management Service. She says that the MPA program gave her an overall understanding of the public sector and helped to prepare her for almost any situation. Currently, she works for the Department of Licensing as a Project Manager. If you live in Washington State and you successfully renew your divers license on-line, then you have come in contact with Kendra’s work, as that was her project.

Kendra is now in her first semester as a Public Administration and Policy Ph.D. student at Portland State University.

Gerald Gemmill

Gerald Gemmill graduated in 1999 from the MPA program. His focus during his time of study was on local government administration. Gerald says that he enjoyed the MPA program very much and credits the instructors for their expertise and knowledge of their field.

Gerald currently holds the position of Operations Director for Spokane County. In this position Gerald reports to the Chief Executive Officer and the Board of County Commissioners. Department heads who are not in elected positions report to him, including Engineering and Roads, the Utility Division, Building and Planning, Facilities, Human Resources, etc. Gerald says that he loves the diversity of his job and the ability to work with so many talented officials.

Alumni News

Class of ’87– Steve Worthington, MPA, has recently been appointed city manager of Fife. He had been the city’s community development director since 1998.

*Alumni who would like to share any news or updates are encouraged to send their information either via mail to Public Administration, College of Business and Public Administration, 668 N. Riverpoint Blvd., Suite A, Spokane WA 99202-1660 or to Dr. Larry Luton at lluton@mail.ewu.edu.*
Faculty Updates

Dr. Larry Luton went to China in October 2005 to participate in two public administration conferences. In Chengdu, he presented a paper on the kinds of research methods used in American public administration at the International Conference on Public Administration. In Xiamen, he did a PowerPoint presentation explaining how he uses a case study to set a framework for his class on public policy cycles.

Dr. Luton is also scheduled to present papers in February 2006 at the Public Administration Theory Network conference in Olympia and the annual conference of the American Society for Public Administration in April 2006.

Dr. Bob Zinke has been working with the Mesa Verde Museum Association, to develop grant proposals. The Association is a non-profit organization associated with Mesa Verde National Park, which is located in the '4 corners' area of southwestern Colorado. Next year is the centennial celebration of the Park, having been established on June 29, 1906. This is one of 8 areas of the world, designated by the United Nations as a 'cultural preserve.' It was home to the 'cliff dwellers of the American southwest, ancestors to the Pueblo Indians, and formerly known as the 'Anasazi' Indians.

Over the summer, Dr. Zinke was elected as Chair of the Living Green Committee, which is associated with Spokane Neighborhood Action Programs. The Living Green Committee seeks to encourage life-styles and resources usage that encourages environmental conservation and sustainability.

Dr. Zinke has also been working on an article dealing with 'public theology and organizational structure,' seeking to determine whether different styles of theological reflection and belief are associated with different types of organizing and organizational structure.

Dr. Terry Novak has been continuing his cooperative work with the MSW Program. He just finished teaching Personnel Administration in Yakima, and will teach the grant writing course in Yakima winter quarter. The cycle then starts again in the summer with Planning and Budgeting in Everett.

Dr. Novak has just finished serving on the hiring committee for the new Director of Spokane International Airport. The committee brought in and ranked 5 candidates from around the country.

Congratulations to Dr. Novak and his family as they invite a new daughter-in-law into their family.

Meet Rose Morgan

Rose Morgan began working for the College of Business and Public Administration at EWU in 1994 and moved to Riverpoint with the Urban Planning Program from the Cheney campus in 1997. She has worked for EWU since 1979. Prior to coming to EWU in 1979 Rose was a medical secretary working for private doctors, Holy Family and St. Luke's Memorial Hospital. In 2002, the Dean added the Masters in Public Administration Program, the Health Services Administration Undergraduate program and in 2004 the Graduate Certificate in HSAD to her duties. Rose is one of only about two secretaries at EWU who has remained with the same department (Urban Planning) for many years, and says that she has “thoroughly enjoyed adding the MPA and HSAD programs and getting to know these students, in addition to the Urban Planning students.”

Rose’s official title is Secretary Lead. She works for two chairs, Dr. Fred Hurand, who is chair of the entire Department of Urban Planning, Public and Health Administration, and Dr. Larry Luton, Director of the Masters in Public Administration program. She says that she “is fortunate to have two of the greatest supervisors imaginable.” Her job consists of managing and assisting students, faculty, and staff within five programs. When asked “What would be the most important thing that you would want students and faculty to know about you and your position?” Rose replied “I love my job and I try to be available to the students in my programs and in the College of Business and Public Administration also.” “My office hours don’t allow me much contact with the MPA and HSAD students but I invite any of you to stop by the office or call me if you need any assistance or just want to say hi.”
## Winter/Spring 2006 PADM Course Schedules

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<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
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<td>Research Tools of the Adminis-</td>
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