Healing from Tragedy Serves to Define Us

As I sit in my office penning this message it is ten years to the day after the horrendous terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. It is just over 150 days since the April 27, 2011 tornadoes that devastated Tuscaloosa and surrounding Alabama communities. It is also 9 months since Jonathan Reid went to his home in Kingston, Jamaica to become a member of the Jamaican National Track and Field Team.

September 11, 2001 is one of the rare days that should be etched in everyone’s memory. I can vividly recall standing in a large atrium at the University of Central Florida with around 500 students watching the planes attack our heartland. Despite 500 people being in a small space, you could have heard a pin drop—it was so quiet—that sensation alone was unnerv- ing. I am sure each of you can also recall where you were when the mass media in real time graphically displayed the tragic events.

On a national scale, the intent of al Qaeda was to damage and hurt the United States. Much as the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on January 7, 1941 “awakened a sleeping giant,” the 9/11 attacks resulted in a tremendous increase in patriotism and devotion to preserving the United States. Many young people flocked to join the military and other national services as a direct result of 9/11. For instance, Pat Tillman gave up a lucrative National Football League career to serve in the armed forces and was subsequently killed in Afghanistan.

The symbolism of attacking on 9/11 was not lost on the first responders, many of whom perished. 9/11 is closely linked to Criminal Justice (CJ) since many of our students will be first responders and many alumni are first responders either in law enforcement or fire rescue. Agencies who investigated the aftermath also relied on many CJ majors. Rather than provide a crippling blow to the U.S., ten years later, Osama Bin Laden is dead and al Qaeda is seriously weakened. More importantly, the patriotism ignited by 9/11 persists to this day.

On a regional scale, the tornadoes that ravished the Southeastern United States and Tuscaloosa on June 27, 2010 also ignited a strong sense of community pride and volunteer action. Again, many CJ and Sociology students and alumni were central players in the rescue and recovery efforts, as well as in the rebuilding of Tuscaloosa. We also had faculty and students who had homes destroyed and lives shattered. However, like 9/11, this tragedy also brought out the best in people. People from around the nation sent donations to Tuscaloosa; even rival football teams such as Kent State and Auburn sent student athletes to help in the aftermath. Donations overwhelmed Tuscaloosa. Students and faculty donated

Almost all of our students were first responders and many of our proud graduates were reduced to tears on this day of celebrating the culmination of their college experience.

Jonathan Reid is a sophomore student athlete at the University of Alabama. He specializes in the triple and high jump for the Track and Field team. Despite his youth, he has already cleared 7 feet in the high jump and ranks among the elite field athletes in the nation.

Jonathan found his way to my office last semester and asked to borrow one of my criminological theory texts. That led to a conversation about why he would want to read such a relatively dry book. He then explained his reason and became a symbol, to me, about why students attend the University of Alabama. Jonathan also epitomizes what we want all our student athletes to be. Resources do not permit many visits home to Kingston, Jamaica, so Jonathan was excited to return to his home during summer of 2011.

On a personal level, Jonathan experienced unexpected tragedy on his highly anticipated return trip home. His first day home his favorite Uncle was shot and killed. One week later one of his young student mentors was also shot and killed near his home. Mourning and contemplation was how Jonathan later explained his reason and became a symbol, to me, about why students attend the University of Alabama.

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Alumni Spotlight

By Tashia Harris and Adam Lankford

Nancy Wall Hewston: Director of Federal Governmental Affairs and Strategic Communications for the Business Council of Alabama

Above: Nancy Wall Hewston (M.S. class of 2001) and Congressman Jo Bonner (Representative from Alabama).

Less than a decade after receiving her master’s degree in Criminal Justice (MSCJ) from The University of Alabama, Nancy Wall Hewston became Director of Federal Governmental Affairs and Strategic Communications for the Business Council of Alabama (BCA). BCA is a member-driven organization which represents approximately 750,000 working Alabamians through their companies, and Hewston responds to all federal legislation that could affect these businesses.

A Major Impact

One of Hewston’s many important tasks is compiling weekly Washington briefings. Hewston examines all critical policies and legislation that are moving through Congress, to make sure that Alabama businesses will know exactly what’s going on and why it matters.

Examples of Hewston’s impact are many. For instance, she has helped the BCA launch its Manufacturing Advocacy Council, which represents major Alabama corporations such as Honda, Boeing, and BF Goodrich Tires. One of the council’s first initiatives will be to build a coalition of business, education, workforce, and economic development leaders who can develop a nationally credentialed and high-quality manufacturing workforce. For local businesses, this means the best and brightest employees. And, for many students and residents, this means jobs! As Hewston explains, “Smart policies are what’s needed to keep Alabama manufacturers competitive, and this council is another way we at BCA are working to support the companies creating jobs and world-class products here in Alabama.”

School Day Memories

Hewston recounts how the faculty and staff in the Department of Criminal Justice helped her along the path to success. “What I remember best is the ongoing support and encouragement of the faculty. The experience provided new ways of thinking that opened more opportunities and career options for me.”

As Hewston recalls, she was treated like an important member of the community—just a number—and this was an invaluable part of her education. “I think the unique thing about the Criminal Justice Department at The University of Alabama is the size. I felt as though I had a relationship with each of my professors. So many of them would take a personal interest, not only in what you were doing in class or what your goals were career-wise, but they took a personal interest in you as a person.”

When asked about her colorful memories as student, Hewston responds, “I remember all my professors [such as Dr. Ida Johnson], lots of my friends, and the study groups.” And she adds with a smile that “I especially remember preparing for comps and thinking that those would never be over.”

Hewston was happy to point out that she currently interacts and works with another Crimson Tide alumnus. “Anita Archie, my immediate supervisor, graduated from The University of Alabama’s law school. She is our senior vice-president for Intergovernmental Affairs Advocacy and Communications. She goes over to the Statehouse everyday that they’re in session.”

Gaining “Real World” Experience

Hewston took her first step into the professional world as a Criminal Justice intern for Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions. Hewston worked in his Washington, D.C. office in the summer before her senior year. “I spent six weeks in D.C. interning for him. That’s when I knew I wanted to go to Washington. By the time I returned to Alabama the fall semester of my senior year, I was offered a research assistantship for grad school in the Criminal Justice department. So without having another job offer at that time and having the opportunity to pursue a master’s, I went down that path.”

Once she completed graduated school, Hewston returned to D.C. to work for the Winston Group, a national polling firm. “A lot of the statistics I took in undergrad and grad school helped me with this job. They would get the polling results back and I would run the different tabs to compile the results of the polls. It didn’t necessarily have a criminal justice application, but the skills that I learned in CJ, I used everyday.”

About a year later, Hewston was offered a position in Senator Sessions’ office as his deputy press secretary. And then, as she explains, “After about four years of working for Senator Sessions, I was given the opportunity to work with Alabama Congressman Jo Bonner as his press secretary. I was with him for about four years as well. I then married and moved back to Alabama and started work for the BCA in February 2010.”

Hewston’s many responsibilities have posed quite the challenge, and in her line of work, it was not always smooth sailing. “Being a press secretary, you’re kind of in the line of fire everyday,” said Hewston. “One of the exciting things about being a spokesman for a member of Congress, you could go to work with one plan and think your day is going to go in one direction and world events, national events completely change that.”

She also found it quite exciting to be working in the nation’s capital. “The unique thing about working in Washington, D.C. is that there are so many talented, young professionals,” Hewston recalls. “I think that it is surprising to so many groups and organizations that go to D.C. for meetings and see that our nation’s leaders are surrounded in large part by people who are under forty. You could tell they were expecting a more ‘seasoned’ crew.”

Plan Without A Plan

The types of opportunities that Hewston seized are still out there. Having gained so much experience in the professional world, Hewston offers some tips for the young, ambitious college students of today. “My advice would be to plan without having a plan. When I went and interned for Senator Sessions, that’s when everything changed and my plan changed. I think you have to be willing to bend and to not be so set in a certain path, or that you have to achieve certain goals in a certain time-line. As long as you’re paying attention to what you’re interested in and learning your strengths and weaknesses, I think that’s the key to being successful.”

Hewston is a classic example of how hard work and a good education will inevitably pay off, even in ways you may not expect. She has accomplished a tremendous amount since her time at The University of Alabama, and we are proud to call her one of our own.
Alumnus and Retired FBI Special Agent Discusses Criminal Profiling

On Tuesday, February 24, 2011, University of Alabama alumnus Charles Dorsey visited the Department of Criminal Justice to share lessons from his experience as a criminal profiler.

Dorsey spent more than 25 years as a special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). He worked many famous homicide cases, including JonBenet Ramsey, Elizabeth Smart, Melissa Brannen, Jessica Lunsford and over 50 other high profile serial killer investigations. He also gained extensive anti-terrorism experience working in Pakistan and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

“There’s the myth, what we see on TV, and then there’s reality,” Dorsey told students as he discussed slides of Dennis Rader, the infamous BTK killer, and Charles Cullen, known as the Angel of Death. “What’s the reality of serial murder? Well it’s jackasses like you see up on the screen.”

Dorsey also shared actual crime scene photos and challenged students to make educated guesses about the sort of killers who would commit those kinds of crimes.

Overall, the students loved his thoughtful and valuable presentation, and many hope to follow in his shoes as they build their own successful careers in the years to come. “He was a very good speaker,” exclaimed senior student Ethan Sandifer. “He did an excellent job in taking on and tackling the myths surrounding criminal profiling.”

Law Professor Addresses International Counterterrorism and Interrogation Tactics

On Tuesday, August 30, 2011, Professor Amos N. Guiora gave a presentation on “International Counterterrorism and Interrogation Tactics” based on his research and his 19 years of experience with the Israeli Defense Forces.

The event was sponsored by The College of Arts and Sciences and the Departments of Criminal Justice and Political Science. Students from all three academic units, along with many UA Law and History students and professors, combined to make the talk a resounding success.

Guiora spoke in an outstanding, freshly renovated new classroom, which was inaugurated with its first guest presentation. The room was filled to over-capacity, and after Guiora’s talk, he graciously stayed another 50 minutes answering questions. A representative from the Israeli Consulate remarked that “it was the best audience and venue” that she has seen. Much thanks to the many University of Alabama students who supported this event!

Along with his service in the Israel Defense Forces as Lieutenant Colonel, Professor Guiora has held a number of senior command positions, including Commander of the IDF School of Military Law, Legal Advisor to the IDF Home Front Command, and Legal Advisor to the Gaza Strip.

He is currently Professor of Law at the S.J. Quinney College of Law with the University of Utah. He is also a Member of the American Bar Association’s Law and National Security Advisory Committee, a Research Fellow at the International Institute on Counter-Terrorism in Herzylia, Israel, and a Corresponding Member of The Netherlands School of Human Rights Research at the University of Utrecht School of Law.

Meet a few of our current Graduate Students...

“Upon the completion of my Master’s Degree, I plan to adjunct as a professor, as well as work full-time as a Child and Family Advocate. My long-term goal is to receive a Ph.D. in Psychology and practice as a Forensic Psychologist. The University of Alabama’s Graduate Criminal Justice program has made these goals possible through small class sizes and student-instructor relationships. Their high expectations have undoubtedly contributed to my work ethic and professional occupational skills.”

-Clay Benson, current graduate student

“The program here at The University is great. With the small classes you are able to achieve a close bond with the instructors that you probably would not get elsewhere. After I graduate from the program, I plan on going to law school to become an attorney.”

-Emily Glass, current graduate student

“The faculty and staff in the Criminal Justice Department are super helpful. They really do want you to succeed. The small student to teacher ratio is also a plus. I know I made the right decision in continuing my education within the Criminal Justice Department at the University of Alabama. Upon graduation, I plan to seek employment within Federal Law Enforcement.”

-Clayton Biggs, current graduate student

“Before I began my undergraduate career, I knew that I wanted to be a lawyer. This in part was due to my military upbringing and my need to help those who can’t help themselves. After getting my bachelors degree in Criminal Justice in 2010, I knew the next step was to obtain my Master’s Degree to further pursue my goals. The small class sizes and great faculty in the CJ Graduate Program at UA have definitely made me feel welcome…After obtaining my Master’s Degree, I still plan to attend law school and one day become a federal prosecutor.”

-Queena Ruffin, current graduate student

For more information, please visit cj.ua.edu and click on “Master’s Program.”
Students Gain Real-World Experience in Criminal Rehabilitation

In Spring 2011, the Department of Criminal Justice offered a course where students got the opportunity to directly help women from the Birmingham Work Release program who would soon be up for parole.

Throughout the semester, the students learned from instructor Catherine Roden-Jones about how to help potential parolees brave the challenges of re-entry into society. And then they put that newfound knowledge into practice, as they were paired up with women from the work release program and began regular meetings to provide counseling, support, and advice.

Roden-Jones has extensive experience in the field and is director of the Alabama Women’s Resource Network. As she explained, “I’m really excited about this class, and the students have taken it like crazy…The students have developed a real sense of pride through this—they have seen that they are the voice for these women.”

In order to ensure the success of both the program and the class, Roden-Jones specifically identified women in the system who had clean disciplinary records and who had already demonstrated their desire to seize new opportunities for growth by attending substance abuse rehabilitation or continuing education classes.

As she explained, when it comes to the women they will help, “We look for someone who is taking advantage of things at their disposal, because that personal drive is going to be a factor in their success.”

Above: Students meet to discuss techniques and strategies used for criminal rehabilitation.

Hear about a few of our Graduate and Undergraduate Alumni...

Sheenal Patel is currently the Director of Intake and Placement at Refuge House, a non-profit organization that works directly with the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services to place abused and neglected children into foster care homes.

“I am forever grateful for the wonderful education that I received while at the University of Alabama. The staff and faculty at the University of Alabama’s Department of Criminal Justice take personal interest in each student and will go above and beyond…Not only are they exceptional mentors, but they are extended family members and life-long contacts. These individuals, in combination with my graduate experiences, have shaped and transformed me into the young professional that I am today.”

-Sheenal Patel, M.S. in Criminal Justice, 2009

Darren D. Gil served more than 22 years as a special agent with the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). During this period, he served as Chief of the Counterterrorism Division and as the Counterterrorism Liaison between ATF and the FBI. Earlier in his career, he was also a soldier in the U.S. Army and an officer with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Gil has taught a variety of courses at various institutions and around the world, and he is currently completing his doctoral degree.

-Darren D. Gil, M.S. in Criminal Justice, 1999

Chantel Fox is currently working for Kroll, one of the world’s leading risk consulting companies, which engages in business intelligence and investigations, crisis and emergency management, identity theft restoration, fraud solutions, and more. As she recalls, “The University of Alabama Criminal Justice Graduate Program has allowed me to understand and appreciate the true meaning of education and all of the possibilities it can afford me.”

-Chantel Fox, M.S. in Criminal Justice, 2010

J. William McFarland, Jr. is Director of the Center for Business and Economic Services at The University of West Alabama. As part of his job, he coordinates UWA’s educational outreach, leadership training, economic development, and industrial recruitment/expansion strategies in West Alabama’s Black Belt region. In addition, he is vice chairman of the Southern High Speed Rail Commission, which advocates for the development and implementation of service along the Gulf Coast High Speed Rail Corridor.

- J. William McFarland, Jr, B.S. in Criminal Justice, 2007

Brad J. Latta, attorney at law, is the founder of his own law firm in Birmingham, AL, where he practices in the areas of domestic relations and family law, criminal defense, and civil litigation. Latta received his J.D. in 2008, passed the Alabama Bar Exam on his first attempt, and opened his law firm that fall.

-Brad Latta, B.S. in Criminal Justice, 2002

Amanda Walters is currently pursuing her law degree at the Thomas Goode Jones School of Law at Faulkner University.

“When I chose criminal justice I didn’t fully realize that I would learn to be an expert on issues that effect everyone! The faculty in the criminal justice department at the University of Alabama are so encouraging and helpful with not only coursework, but also with long term goals and ideas. I plan to become an attorney and have already gained so much knowledge and confidence in this field that will benefit me forever.”

-Amanda Walters, M.S. in Criminal Justice, 2011
Congratulations to our Award-Winning CJ Student Scholars!

2011 Graduate Program
- Outstanding Graduate Student Award: Shandra Witherspoon

2011 Undergraduate Program
- James “Bo” Robertson Distinguished Undergraduate Award for Highest Academic Performance: Kylie Donnelly
- Chairperson’s Award of Merit: Chuantae’ A. Nichols
- Scott Deaton Endowed Scholarship in Criminal Justice: Susan Francis Penrod

2011 McNair Scholars

Yolanda Barnes from Cottondale, Alabama, Tonya Hutto from Coffee Springs, Alabama, and Brittnay Johnson from Hefflin, Alabama were all named 2011 McNair Scholars.

These students will receive a $2800 research stipend; $1000 for housing and food expenses during the summer research internship; tuition funding for UH 305 (a required course in the year-long program); and funding for participation in the national McNair Scholars research conference. They also will receive support for applying to graduate school. Their studies will be published in the University of Alabama McNair Journal.

More information about the program can be found at http://graduate.ua.edu/mcnair/prospects.html

Please congratulate these fine students if you see them around!

Faculty Feature

Get to Know: Dr. Bronwen Lichtenstein

Esteemed medical sociologist Dr. Bronwen Lichtenstein joined the Department of Criminal Justice in 2004, after spending two years in a cross-appointment in the College of Community Health Sciences and Women’s Studies. She is married to Dr. Stanley Brodsky, an internationally recognized scholar who works in the Department of Psychology. Bronwen and Stan like to travel the globe, mostly because Bronwen comes from New Zealand and has to fly “Down-Under” on a regular basis to see her parents and children.

Bronwen hails from Christchurch, New Zealand, where most of her family remains—or at least they did—until being recently displaced by the unprecedented earthquakes that have devastated her hometown. Christchurch is located on the Pacific Rim’s “Ring of Fire.” Due to plate tectonics, this entire region is subject to earthquakes and volcanoes. However, never before has a large metropolitan area been so devastated. Her family was all forced to leave their ancestral homes—permanently—and communication was often non-existent. This series of earthquakes occurred during the same period last spring when the tornadoes hit Tuscaloosa.

Many of our faculty, staff, and students who were harmed by the tornado had another “home” that they could relocate to. Unfortunately, Bronwen’s home from halfway across the globe was in even worse shape. One can only imagine the stress this would cause. Bronwen’s reaction was to continue with her daily life (which is mostly work). But she also felt a deeper appreciation for the students impacted by the local tornadoes, and went out of her way to work extra hard for these students.

On a lighter note, when she is not staring at a computer, Bronwen likes to tend her unruly garden with her daily life (which is mostly work). But she also felt a deeper sense of empathy and concern for the students impacted by the local tornadoes, and went out of her way to work extra hard for these students.

Despite being a teetotaler, Bronwen also learned that the British like to drink huge amounts of alcohol, which seems to offer protection against the constant rain, chilly weather, and budget cuts that were imposed after the Great Recession. While Bronwen was at the University of Southampton, an entire program was axed, and faculty and staff either lost jobs or were demoted. Even worse cuts were expected in the months to come. We are fortunate to be experiencing growth and relative economic prosperity here at the Capstone!

Bronwen got first-hand experience on the differences between the police forces in England and Alabama when she was injured after being knocked from her bicycle by some teenage boys. Two female police officers arrived on bicycle to take a report—and then stayed to have a chat over a cup of tea and biscuits. There were no guns, no flashing blue lights, and no “track-em-down” reports to police headquarters over the airwaves. The teenage perpetrators, of course, were never captured—or perhaps even sought—but Bronwen and Stan have fond memories of spending a nice evening with two of “Britain’s Finest.”

Within the Department of Criminal Justice, Bronwen has worked particularly closely with a few students, who were fortunate enough to have her as a mentor. They walked away from the experience with not only greatly enhanced research skills, but also a deeper appreciation for diversity and for overcoming both natural disasters and intellectual challenges.
Faculty Update

Rebecca Howell - Dr. Howell continues to research and publish in the areas of criminological theory, delinquency, drug use, and pedagogy. She is affiliate faculty of UA’s Center for the Prevention of Youth Behavior Problems and faculty advisor for the department’s Criminal Justice Student Association. According to Dr. Howell, in the past year she has “published three refereed journal articles and one eBook; served as sole/co-author on 11 refereed articles currently forthcoming or under review; completed two grant-funded research studies; was awarded one internal research grant; as Co-Investigator, submitted two federal grant proposals (USDOJ and NIH); and supervised quantitative research conducted by two doctoral, four master’s, and two undergraduate students.”

Ida Johnson - Dr. Johnson earned her B.S. in Criminal Justice from Alabama State University, her M.S. from The University of Alabama and her Doctorate in Criminology from Florida State University. She has provided considerable administrative service to the Capstone, serving as Chairperson in both Women’s Studies and Criminal Justice. She is author of over 30 scholarly articles in the areas of domestic violence, school violence, date rape, and women who kill. Dr. Johnson is currently writing scholarly articles on women on parole. She will present a paper entitled “Barriers to Women’s Success on Parole” at the Southern Criminal Justice Association in Nashville, TN in September 2011, and she recently completed an Executive Report to the Alabama Board of Pardons and Parole on the same subject. Dr. Johnson has also published a book entitled Forced Sexual Intercourse in Intimate Relationships (Dartmouth Publishing, with R. Sigler).

Mark M. Lanier - In 2011 and 2012, Dr. Lanier “continued studies on human trafficking in South Africa and Florida.” He has a team of five Arts and Sciences undergraduate student researchers who are assisting with the study. The first paper from the study was published with an undergraduate student this year. His completed text on “Mixed Methods Research Methodologies” with Dr. Lisa Briggs is currently under review with Carolina Press and Oxford University Press. In addition to his departmental administrative duties, he also manages the College of Arts and Sciences’ eChair website.

Adam Lankford - Dr. Lankford has been working to become “one of the world’s leading experts on suicide terrorism.” Previous scholars have assumed that these attackers are psychologically normal, but Dr. Lankford’s findings suggest that “personal crises, mental health problems, and suicidal tendencies play a major role in their violent behavior.” Over the past year, his research received a significant amount of publicity, including a front page story in the Boston Globe’s “Ideas” section, online coverage from CNN, The Atlantic, National Public Radio, Yahoo! News, The Huffington Post, and Foreign Policy, and international coverage in Austria, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

Bronwen Lichtenstein - Dr. Lichtenstein noted that she “spent a semester’s sabbatical leave at the University of Southampton in England in 2010.” Her sabbatical project involved writing a book entitled “Social Stigma and Sexual Epidemics: Dangerous Dynamics,” which will be published in 2012. Dr. Lichtenstein was also appointed President of the Research Committee on Mental Health for the International Sociological Association from 2010-2014. Recent research projects include a study on the social impact of mortgage foreclosure in Tuscaloosa County, an intervention to reduce HIV stigma among college students at UA, and multi-state research on how physicians and social workers counsel HIV-infected people about HIV disclosure laws. In her spare time, Dr. Lichtenstein “looks after her garden, works out at the Student Recreation Center, and likes to watch tennis or football with husband Stan Brodsky.”

Celia Lo - Highlights of Dr. Lo’s accomplishments over the past two years include “exceptional research productivity, extensive student mentorship, and professional services rendered internationally.” Eleven research articles that Dr. Lo authored or co-authored appeared or are forthcoming in refereed journals; five were written with UA undergraduate and graduate students, some of whom achieved lead author status. While at work under an R03 NIAAA research award, Celia Lo also submitted grant proposals to NSF and NIDA. She was appointed by Italy’s ministry of health to serve as a grant reviewer, and she was named an honorary board member of the Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation international journal.

Ariane Prohaska - Most recently, Dr. Prohaska has published papers on both the difficulties of cross-gender interviewing about sexuality and on the shortcomings of the Family and Medical Leave Act—continuing her research agenda that focuses on sociology of gender and sociology of the family. She also has an article under review about “feederism,” a behavior involving weight gain for erotic purposes. Dr. Prohaska is also currently working “on a grant-funded study about how individuals experience the process of filing for bankruptcy after the law changed in 2005.” She was a 2010-2011 Faculty Fellow in Service Learning and as a result has developed a Gender and Poverty service learning course that she is teaching in Fall 2011. Her students are working with Project Team-Up to help tornado survivors in Holt.

Jimmy Williams - Dr. Williams remains Associate Dean for Multicultural Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Williams earned his B.S. (with honors), M.S., and Ph.D. in Criminology from the Florida State University. His research interests focus on the processing of criminal drug cases and the political aspects of the American judicial system. His research and service have been recognized by the American Council on Education (Fellow), the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), and by several academic honor societies. In addition to his full time administrative position, he teaches several online courses for the department each year.

Department Welcomes Three New Instructors

We are pleased to welcome three new full-time instructors to the department: Dr. Tiffany Guidry, Dr. Colin Farrell, and Mr. Douglas Klutz.

Allow them to introduce themselves:

"I have a B.A. in Sociology from LSU in Baton Rouge and my M.A. & Ph.D. degrees from University of Arizona in Tucson. I have taught college courses at University of Arizona and Delta State University—where I worked for 2 years—and I was a French teacher at Midland High School in Midland, LA for one semester.

I moved to Tuscaloosa with my husband in 2010 and have taught Sociology of Sexuality (Fall 2010) and Sociology 101 for the University of Alabama. My husband is an Assistant Professor of Economics here, and we are expecting a baby at the end of December.”

-Dr. Tiffany Guidry

Faculty member Dr. Ebony Johnson received her Ph.D. on Friday, August 5, 2011 at Coleman Coliseum.

Many congratulations!
Budget This: A Bright Future For Federal Jobs

By Douglas Klutz

I have quite a few students who come to me expressing interest in a career with the federal government. After all, federal jobs have a history of offering some of the best benefits out there in the job market, ranging from the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) to various student loan repayment options, and even the luxury of knowing that in most federal jobs you will receive 10 paid holidays every year. The benefits of having a federal job in the current economic climate are further compounded when you take into account the main worry on everyone’s mind: job security. While federal employees are not immune to layoffs, they do enjoy greater protection than the majority of their private sector counterparts. In the context of our severe job market malaise, all of this may sound too good to be true. And at least recently, it has been too good to be true. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the labor force participation rate for the 16-24 year old age cohort working or looking for work was 59.5 percent in July 2011. This was the lowest July employment participation rate on record. In addition, federal jobs have become exceedingly competitive since the economic meltdown in 2008. Savvy job seekers from the tumultuous private sector have looked to cut potential losses early and jump ship into the federal job arena. All of a sudden, the federal job market that had previously been ridiculed and scorned for so many years instantly became the coveted Holy Grail for job seekers. Furthermore, the federal budget scene has been an absolute disaster over the past couple of years, and will most likely only get worse for FY 2012. Adding fuel to the fire, the Partnership for Public Service has estimated the government will hire 30,000 to 40,000 fewer workers for FY 2012 compared to fiscal years 2008 through 2010. But through all of these darkening clouds, there is a ray of light on the horizon when it comes to the future of federal jobs. You are probably wondering what possible bright spots, if any, could be out there in the federal hiring realm. To answer this question, we look toward age demographics as one primary factor to give us a good indication of what the hiring front in the federal government will hold. Simply put, the baby-boomer cohort is reaching retirement age and will be leaving behind lots of vacancies in the near future. No matter how much infighting goes on in Washington over future budgetary issues, the need to fill mission-critical positions will remain. President Barack Obama’s FY 2012 budget proposal seeks to add 8,000 new hires to the Homeland Security Department. Many of these new jobs will be in large growth areas such as law enforcement and cybersecurity. With an election on the horizon, and once the FY 2012 budget is finally passed, you can count on the United States Secret Service to ramp up their hiring efforts as well.

On December 27, 2010, President Obama released an executive order detailing new recruitment and hiring initiatives for students and recent graduates. These hiring initiatives will be collectively known as the Pathways Program, and will include the Presidential Management Fellows Program, Internship Program, and the Recent Graduates Program. The theory behind these new hiring initiatives is to make entry into the federal government easier for current students and recent graduates. These internship programs will prove especially beneficial for students who are interested in a career with the federal government, but who lack years of real-world professional work experience. The new Pathways Program demonstrates the federal government’s commitment to promote a diverse workforce by including students and recent graduates who might not otherwise be afforded an opportunity to compete for entry-level federal jobs.

As dire as the employment landscape looks right now for recent graduates, a career with the federal government might just prove to be your best opportunity. The new hiring initiatives in the form of the Pathways Program, coupled with the aging out of the baby-boomer population, should set the stage for significant hiring among young professionals. As our security threats continue to grow and evolve both domestically and internationally, so too will the capacity of our federal law enforcement agencies through the creation of more highly specialized positions. Just remember, networking and geographical flexibility will be the key components to landing a federal job. Use our internship program (CJ-395) as a means to network and develop contacts with federal law enforcement agencies. And as soon as the political bickering and budgetary squabbles have subsided in Washington, be prepared to see many more opportunities become available in the federal government.

Mr. Douglas Klutz is a new full-time instructor in the department, as well as the internship and advising director.

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Questions? Contact staff members Brenda Parsons or Vonda James at (205) 348-7795 or Department Chair Mark M. Lanié at (205) 348-6846 or mmlanie@as.ua.edu.
If you are a graduate from The University of Alabama’s Department of Criminal Justice, we would love to hear from you!

Please let us know about any news from your life that we can share with other members of our community: new jobs, promotions, marriages, kids, arrests, and so on!

Email: mmlanier@as.ua.edu