

BAUCUS

I N S T I T U T E

U N I V E R S I T Y O F M O N T A N A



Dear Friends,

First, thank you for your continued interest in and support for the Max Baucus Institute. Your encouragement, participation, and financial support for the Institute are what make all of the wonderful programs we highlight in this newsletter possible. I am excited to share with you some of the incredible work that is being done by our outstanding Baucus Institute scholars and leaders in Montana and across the country.

At its core, the Baucus Institute is about giving people opportunities to engage in meaningful and impactful work that moves the needle in making our country a more equitable, just, and democratic place for all. As the director, my most important metric in assessing the success of the Institute is the impact we are able to make on the lives of the groups we serve. Among these groups are young people from rural and underserved communities in Montana, who have a tremendous amount to contribute as public servants and a strong desire to do so, but often lack access to opportunities. As you will read in this newsletter, the Institute is experiencing tremendous success in bridging this gap through our programs. While we are gratified by this success, we are not complacent and continue to push on all fronts to increase our impact by creating more opportunities for engagement.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and invite your questions and feedback. Please reach out anytime. We wish each of you a happy holiday season and look forward to seeing you in the new year,

Sam Panarella, Director

Al Gore and Max Baucus Discuss Climate and Hope



Former Vice President Al Gore and former Senator and Ambassador Max Baucus discussed climate change, and reasons for hope, in front of a large in-person and online audience on Thursday, October 28, as part of the 2021 Baucus Institute Speakers Series.

“Every night on the news is like a nature hike through the Book of Revelations,” said Gore in his opening remarks, prompting laughter from the in-person watch party at University of Montana. Over 100 people gathered in the Alice Lund Instructional (ALI) Auditorium for the live portion of the event, which was co-hosted by The Nature Conservancy. “We need as many voices as we can calling for positive change.”

The Baucus Institute Director, Sam Panarella, moderated the conversation on stage with Max Baucus while Al Gore participated from his Tennessee studio via Zoom. Over 1,000 viewers registered from around the world for the Zoom webinar.

Both Gore and Baucus spoke of seeing changes in policy over their careers as public servants. “Political will is itself a renewable resource,” said Gore. “It always seems impossible until it’s done.”

Baucus agreed, noting how he watched China’s President Xi’s stance on climate change evolve during his time as ambassador. “President Xi saw an opportunity for new technology and for global leadership. He also needed to take action for his people.”

Gore also spoke of being inspired by the “tremendous leadership” of Native American and Indigenous communities. “We should strive to emulate the type of leadership that they have shown in protecting lands that include 80 percent of the world’s biodiversity.” Baucus agreed, saying that he was inspired by their “spiritual, cultural, permanent work” in protecting and preserving their lands.

Two Baucus Climate Scholars, Aspen Ward and Audrey Glendenning, asked questions from the live audience event. Panarella noted that this new program is giving students direct experience working for organizations at the forefront of climate change research and activism. Both Gore and Baucus spoke of being inspired by younger generations today and having hope for the future.

“Support for climate activism has never been higher, and it’s being driven by young people,” said Gore. “If we take bold action today, we can and will avert the worst consequences of this crisis.”

Audience feedback from the event has been tremendously positive, and the Baucus Institute looks forward to hosting more events with support from a five-year sponsorship from Stockman Bank.

New Baucus Leaders Montana Program is Successful



Cara Grewell

Our first cohort of Baucus Leaders Montana reported that their summer fellowships were positive and valuable experiences. This program is modeled on our Washington DC program, and places students with Montana-based nonprofit and governmental organizations. The 2021 cohort came from the Department of PA & Policy's MPA, MPA/JD, MPA/MPH programs, as well as the undergraduate program in nonprofit administration.

Cara Grewell worked with the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE). Her projects included analyzing survey results of the Montana10 program and making recommendations for future funding, as well as working with the former lieutenant governor on tribal relations reports to identify trends in submissions.



Rachael Foe

Rachael Foe worked with Missoula County on land management and sustainability, including bringing together department heads, community and planning services teams, and other stakeholders. "I got to meet with insiders and really learn how the county works," said Foe.

Ashley Brittner Wells worked with the City of Missoula, project managing the city's participation in the National League of Cities' 2021 Cities of Opportunity cohort. She also worked closely with Missoula County's Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (JEDI) workgroup. "I got a crash course in how to pass a resolution in the city," she said, noting that she was hired beyond her two-month fellowship.



Ashley Brittner Wells

Clara Bentler worked with the Montana Department of Justice, Motor Vehicle Division. Her project entailed creating a survey for people working in DMVs across the country and Canada, with an aim to improve the functions of DMVs. At the end of her fellowship, she presented her research to her supervisor and the company they hired to carry out recommendations.

Other fellows included Jacqueline Baldwin-LeClair at the UM American Indian Governance Institute, Renee Kelley at the Montana Legislative Research and Policy Office, and Connor Timpone at the Montana Nonprofit Association.

All the participating organizations said they were thrilled to have Baucus Leaders Montana working for them this past summer. The Institute is proud of their work and looks forward to seeing what our 2022 cohort achieves.



Clara Bentler



Jacqueline Baldwin-LeClair



Renee Kelley



Connor Timpone

Updates from the Inaugural Baucus Climate Scholars

Modeled after our Baucus Leaders program, and building on Max Baucus' long and distinguished bipartisan legislative record in environmental and natural resources matters, we launched the Baucus Climate Scholars program in summer 2021. Judging by the feedback from both the students and the host organizations, our first cohort of four students did extremely well!



Raina Woolworth worked with Ernst and Young on climate taxes. She helped review data for a Global Tax Tracker that identifies the sustainability regulations and taxes in 28 different countries. She also researched public climate spending and spending by the top 30 banks in the world.

"I feel like I have gained a better understanding of the importance of tax and regulation in hitting carbon emissions reductions goals," she said, "and I have had a wonderful time working on these projects with my team!"



Aspen Ward worked with The Nature Conservancy, focusing on issues preventing prescribed fire from being used as a management tool. Ward developed policy options and arguments to incentivize prescribed fire use in Montana.

"My work has included building a comparative matrix of regulations and successful bills at the federal and state levels to synthesize what legal reforms may work in Montana with written deliverables to be used during policy development," she said.



Audrey Glendenning worked with Brookings Institute, mainly with data about ambient air quality monitors located on tribal lands and learning how tribal governments interact with the Clean Air Act and other environmental policies.

She noted that her supervisor, Adele Morris, encouraged her to attend networking events and other meetings, and was "an amazing teacher and mentor. She always took the time to explain Brookings' internal operations, policy current events, and economic terminology."



Jared Gibbs worked with the American Enterprise Institute, primarily on carbon tax research. He helped produce reports on renewable energy subsidy programs, the impact of carbon taxes on energy prices, and general preparation and support for policy advocacy work.

"All in all," said Gibbs, "I am quite humbled to have been selected as a member of the inaugural cohort of Baucus Climate Scholars given how enriching, challenging, and rewarding the program has been thus far."

2021 Public Service Academy Focused on Resiliency

The Baucus Institute's Department of Public Administration and Policy continues its work to train every public servant in the state of Montana. The Department's 2021 Public Service Academy was held in-person in August at the UM's ALI Auditorium for 80+ public servants and nonprofit employees. With the theme "Resiliency and Leadership for Public and Nonprofit Sector Professionals," this two-day conference featured sessions on emotional labor, election integrity, using grants to implement change, and an inspiring closing session by Dr. Brock Tessman from OCHE.

The second annual Baucus Innovation Challenge took place during lunch on the first day, with attendees watching video pitches from nonprofit and public sector organizations doing innovative work. Participants voted electronically and awarded the Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UCCC), part of the Montana Department of Resources and Conservation, to receive the 2021 award and cash prize.

The UCCC's pitch detailed their partnership with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Their industry outreach project enlists Big Sky Watershed Corps members to educate the hundreds of water-based businesses and customers statewide with the "Clean, Drain, Dry" campaign, which initiates one-on-one conversations about the impacts of aquatic invasive species and how to prevent their spread.

"We were all very excited to share the work we are doing," said Cassidy Bender, who accepted the prize on behalf of the UCCC. "Education and outreach are vital in making change in private and public sectors, but it feels all the more special when your type of outreach is connecting with the people of your community face-to-face."

The UCCC plans to dedicate the prize money to further outreach efforts and the Big Sky Watershed Corps members who originally brought the idea to life.

Next year's Public Service Academy will take place in August 2022. Watch for more information in the spring because the event sells out quickly.

"The 2021 Public Service Academy re-sparked my joy in public service and my appreciation for all the wonderful people who dedicate their time, energy and lives to serving others.

It reminded me just how important community is and how lucky I feel to have it within my agency, the city of Missoula, and the realm of public service."

—Cassidy Bender



MPA Students: Making Career Strides and Giving Back

Students come to the Department of Public Administration & Policy for many different reasons, from career advancement to fulfilling their life goals. In this issue we're highlighting some of our Master's in Public Administration students who are great examples of how the MPA program encourages students to excel in public service and make a difference in their communities. A common thread between their stories is how their time in the MPA program is helping them achieve their goals.



After **Olivia Blaylock** studied health science in undergrad, she worked in an emergency response shelter for refugee children.

"I've always had a passion for helping others," she said.

She enrolled in the MPA program to further her career, and was recently promoted to Executive Director for an assisted living facility. She noted the direct applications of the MPA program, from the practical budgeting skills to a deeper understanding of the disparities people face, and how she can help people on a larger scale.



Alexis Burton is working as a kindergarten/preschool teacher at a Montessori school in Washington state while studying nonprofit administration online.

She shared how the alignment between her coursework and the practical applications in her professional role make for "blissful learning."

Alexis enjoys the flexibility to choose courses that are personally impactful to her. She recently began a podcast called "Our Common Unity" as a result of an independent study project, where she's exploring what it means to participate in a community in a meaningful way.



Kaitlyn Farrar decided to pursue an MPA/MPH degree after obtaining an undergraduate degree in wildlife biology. She describes having an epiphany in a course on poverty policy, where she began thinking how to advance public health for vulnerable populations by reducing environmental hazards.

Kaitlyn recently earned a new position as a health insurance navigator for the Montana Primary Care Association where she is helping people find affordable insurance plans. She noted how her studies have already opened doors, and that "all the professors want to help and see you succeed."



Rozlyn Haley is a University of Montana employee and this fall's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Fellow with Missoula County. She is thrilled to be working with Jamar Galbreath, Missoula Equity Coordinator.

Rozlyn describes the impact of the MPA program with a metaphor from her undergraduate degree: "I'm an art major, and when you start drawing, you start to see things differently." Similarly, the MPA program has been eye-opening, and she wants to see where she can make an impact and help to leave a better world behind for everyone.



Julie Heaton spent this summer sharpening her interest in global and societal inequities while interning for the Montana World Affairs Council. She focused on promoting and organizing the Council's webcast "Connect Montana," that enlists speakers from around the world to discuss current affairs. Her work included developing audience surveys and starting a Facebook Live series "The Take Away" that expands on the webcast's themes.

"When we learn about other countries and cultures we create a powerful educational tool for addressing common issues like inequality," she said.



Danny Power decided to pursue an MPA/MPH degree to build on his hard science background and develop the skillset of navigating the public sphere.

He credited the expertise he's learned in the program and his connection with his mentor, Kali Wicks (MPA '14), in helping him obtain his new position as the Electronic Lab Reporting Coordinator for the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services.

"Kali talked through her journey," he said, "and helped me get a picture of what else you can do. She broadened my understanding of career opportunities."



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For more information on giving or our programs, contact Sam Panarella, Director of the Baucus Institute, at 406.243.6623 or samuel.panarella@umontana.edu.



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Public service is the most noble human endeavor.

Max