

Meeting the Policy Challenge in Urban Education



October 2006
Vol 1, Issue 1

Brown University, Master's Program in Urban Education Policy

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Welcome to the first newsletter of the new Master's Program in Urban Education Policy (UEP) at Brown University! This innovative graduate program in Brown's Education Department was created to train the next generation of leaders in the field of urban education. A collaboration between Education Department faculty and leading scholars and practitioners at The Annenberg Institute for School Reform, The Education Alliance, and The Taubman Center for Public Policy, the UEP is an intensive, twelve-month program designed to provide students with the understanding and skills needed to analyze and design policies that impact urban schools. Combining rigorous coursework with day-to-day practice in an education policy setting, this unique program encourages students to bridge theory and practice, and prepares graduates for advanced study or careers in governmental, educational, and community-based organizations that focus on urban education policy.

Our first cohort of students, which began the program in June, is deeply engaged in fall coursework, research projects, and field-based internships. Read on to find out **WHO** they are and **WHO's** teaching them, **WHAT** they're doing, **WHY** they're here, and **HOW** you can get involved!

Message from the Director

October 4, 2006

Dear students, parents, friends, and colleagues,

Greetings from Brown University!



Early this week, Providence city and district officials listened to a series of presentations by students in our Urban Education Policy Program (UEP) in the Dewey Conference Room in Barus Hall. For four hours, our guests listened intently to how students framed the study questions, gathered the evidence to address the issues, and proposed policy options for urban decision makers. While Joshua Marland and Chris Caldarone examined lessons learnt from other cities regarding **teacher recruitment, quality, and compensation**, Katie Wieland looked for alternative ways to improve **governance accountability**. Charlotte North and Dana Borrelli critically examined **alternative models of school restructuring**, while Janet Santos took on the challenge of **parental and community engagement**. Patrick Fahy synthesized the evidence on efforts to redesign the **urban principalship**. David Margolis argued for **better coordination between health care and schooling services** in supporting inner city children and their families. These briefing reports constitute an important part of the resource packet for participants at the Oct 13 Mayoral Forum on Education Reform, an event jointly organized by Providence Mayor David Cicilline and the UEP. Clearly, this session was merely one example where our first cohort of UEP students showed their passion in urban school policy and their commitment to use research and analytical skills to address major urban challenges.

Needless to say, as UEP director, I am very proud of the measurable progress of our students in such a short time.

It was only four months ago that they came to the UEP and started with two core courses taught by our clinical faculty at the Annenberg Institute, an entity that is nationally known for supporting reform in urban districts. By the end of the summer session, our students, working with our outreach director, Lamont Gordon, began to set up their own plan for a 9-month internship with governmental and non profit agencies. Our students have provided a profile of their interests and their internship activities in this newsletter.

To make sure that we have the best program for tomorrow's urban education policy designers and analysts, the Education Faculty has successfully recruited two outstanding social scientists to teach the core courses in policy analysis and quantitative research methods. **Rosa Cho** earned her PhD from the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago and **Marty West** received his PhD in the Department of Government at Harvard. Rosa and Marty are joining a vibrant program where research and practice are integrated in the curriculum. Their scholarly profiles are featured in this inaugural issue of the UEP newsletter.

Not only did we hire the top social scientists last year, our alumni in the Brown community have shown their confidence in the UEP even at this early stage. In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to formally announce the generous gifts to support UEP student fellowship provided by **Robin Stearns** and her husband, **Leonard Gail, Ellen Alberding, and Michael Schield**. On behalf of UEP, I extend a heartfelt thank you for their contribution to our fellowship fund. *continued on page 2*

Message from the Director We are also very fortunate to have received generous foundation support for various major events. The Broad Foundation provides a grant to support the **Mayoral Forum on October 13**. A Spencer Foundation grant will support a **national conference on History of Education and Policy in June 13-15, 2007**. The *Annenberg Institute* underwrites part of the expense of the History of Education Conference and provides support for the UEP year-long lecture series. With partial support from the *Rhode Island Foundation*, the UEP and the Annenberg Institute are working with the *National Governors Association* and other partners on a December conference on collective bargaining. Our faculty members have also provided research opportunities to our UEP students in several externally-funded projects.

Our UEP faculty and staff are ready to build on our early success to further elevate the reputation of the program. I would very much like to encourage you to spread the word about the UEP. We cherish our culture at Brown in terms of student support, mentoring, and advising. I hope you will let us know how we can continue to build the UEP program. Please feel free to email me or Ann D'Abrasca, our program administrator, if you have any questions on the program. In the not too distant future, I am confident that the UEP will make its significant contribution to urban education improvement across the nation.

Best,

Kenneth K. Wong

The Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair for Education Policy
Director, Urban Education Policy Program

Current Students

Read on for brief biographies of the *First Year UEP students*, as well as descriptions of their *summer research projects and year-long internships!*

DANA BORRELLI

*B.A. Anthropology, George Washington University
M.A. Anthropology with an emphasis on Ethnomusicology and Linguistic Anthropology methods, UMass © Amherst.*

With a special interest in the use of anthropological methodology in education research, Dana will focus her work in policy around the intersection of education and social justice issues. This year, Dana will work with the Dunn Institute on a charter school development team. She is also working as a teaching assistant for Shirley Brice Heath's Anthropology of Education course and as a research assistant for the Annenberg Institute for School Reform.

CHRISTIAN CALDARONE

*B.A. Creative Writing, Hofstra University
M.A. US History, Providence College*

Previous to the UEP program, Christian taught at a private high school in Providence for four years. His experience living and starting a family in a city neighborhood and his belief in the value of education equity attracted him to the Brown program. In addition, Christian owns an art gallery with his wife. He would like someday to incorporate his interests in art and education; one focus he pursues is developing curriculum that draws particularly on a variety of creative means of interpretation and expression.

DAVID MARGOLIS

*B.A. Mathematics, University of Rochester
M.S. Computer Science, Brown University*

David comes to the UEP program with extensive experience in technological and database design. He has served most recently as the President of Silogram Inc. where he, among other tasks, has worked to develop tools for and provide math tutoring and standardized test prep privately and to schools. David's interest in education policy is rooted in the desire to have a positive effect on the development of youth by working to improve education systems; particular interests include teaching math and the interface between health care and education.

PATRICK FAHY

*B.A. Political Science and English, Rutgers University
Graduate, Air Command and Staff College, Air University
Graduate, Academic Instructor School, Air University*

Patrick comes to the UEP Program after extensive work in public policy. His policy experience includes having served as program director for the Governor's Counterdrug Task Force for the State of New York, and membership on the New York State Youth Development Team. Previous to that, Patrick spent 10 years in federal government policy as an Air Force officer, having served as an Executive Staff Officer, as well as a planner and aviator in the first Gulf War and Operation Just Cause. Patrick has extensive leadership/management consulting experience and his clients have included school boards, administrative education teams, Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. Most recently, he worked as a leadership coach for an urban high school, with a primary charge of re-culturing the school.

It has been the cumulative impact of these experiences that has led Patrick to pursue graduate work in education policy. Seeing firsthand the plight and inequities of our urban cities throughout our nation has led him to the realization that there is a profound need for better social/education policy and he wants to contribute to the solution.

JOSHUA MARLAND

*B.S. Public relations, Business minor: University of Florida
Began master's program in research and evaluation methodology in education, but left to join us at Brown!*

Joshua is a Rhode Island native and a graduate of Warwick Veterans Memorial High School. Since coming to the program, he has primarily worked in research and evaluation for the department. His professional goal is to work in education policy at some level for a period of time before entering a policy program in Providence (at Brown) or in Washington D.C.

CHARLOTTE NORTH

*B.A. English Literature, Swarthmore College
M.A.T. Biology, Brown University*

Charlotte taught high school English/humanities in three public school systems: Narragansett, RI, New York City, and Brookline, MA. She has been involved in various school level reform initiatives, but wants to better understand larger scale, coordinated change efforts. Post-UEP, Charlotte wants to support sustainable school improvement and more equitable student outcomes, whether working for a school district, state, or reform support organization. *continued on page 3*

current students

JANET SANTOS

B.A. History and Portuguese & Brazilian Studies, Brown University

Janet has been working at the Education Alliance at Brown University as a program associate. In this role, Janet co-authored two publications and assisted and presented at various trainings, conference, and workshops in school districts throughout the northeast. Janet's areas of interest include international education, women and education, race and ethnicity in educational systems, urban education in the age of globalization, and the impact of popular culture on students' sense of identity. She speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese and enjoys spending time abroad.

KATHERINE WIELAND

B.A. Political Science and Elementary Education, Wheaton College

Katie comes to the UEP program after spending her last year teaching second grade at the Greenwich Country Day School in Greenwich, Connecticut. Katie has worked in a number of classrooms settings in varying locales, including Providence, Attleboro, MA, and Brighton, England. She hopes to find herself immersed in a policy setting either on the foundation or federal level, focusing on issues of equity and access imbedded in curricular development.

SUMMER PROJECTS 2006

DANA BORELLI:

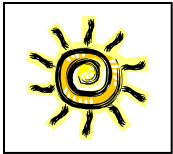
Dana's summer research project at Brown/Fox Point Early Childhood Center evaluated the professional development of teachers around the school's anti-bias curriculum.

JOSHUA MARLAND:

Over the summer, Josh worked with Professor Wong on several research projects. The first project was for the National Science Foundation's Math and Science Partnership grant. He also worked on a project for the Providence Public Schools and the City of Philadelphia. In addition, he has done work with Brown/Fox Point, as a part of his summer research requirement, on professional development relating to their anti-bias curriculum.

KATHERINE WIELAND & CHRISTIAN CALDARONE:

Over the summer, Katie and Christian worked with the Providence After school Alliance (PASA) to find a sustainable funding strategy to maintain the mayoral after school initiative. Specifically, Katie and Christian explored whether the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), administered through Rhode Island's Department of Human Services (DHS) was a viable option for after school funding for PASA. Ultimately, after conducting data analysis they discovered that CCAP, while a possible funding source for PASA, should not be relied solely upon for sustainability. They concluded that sustainable funding was inextricably linked to the overall issue of organizational sustainability which should be considered in after school planning.



DAVID MARGOLIS & JANET SANTOS:

This past summer, David and Janet used community based organizations to improve communication between the Providence School Department and parents, specifically around the newly established high school graduation requirements.

CHARLOTTE NORTH & PATRICK FAHY:

"No Principal Left Behind: How can the district central office best support each principal's growth as an instructional leader?" Dr. Mary Canole, the Director of Progressive Support and Intervention at the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, was the project sponsor. Due to a spate of recent principal retirements and frequent turnover in leadership at some low-performing schools, early career principals lead many schools in Rhode Island. Veteran principals also are encountering increased pressure for gains in teaching and learning, in the form of state assessments and the need to make adequate yearly progress under the federal requirements of No Child Left Behind. Schools serving similar communities with similar resources can vary greatly in their student achievement, and the principal is instrumental in school improvement efforts. How can districts and the state best build the leadership of building administrators, with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement? From three Rhode Island school districts, Charlotte and Patrick interviewed a sample of principals, central office administrators, and coaches/facilitators (who had worked with principals in the previous year). Their goal was to identify current supports, desired supports, best practices, and challenges. Their recommendations, based both on their interviews and a review of literature, involved both district-level supports and RIDE-coordinated regional supports.

STUDENT INTERNSHIPS 2006-7

Annenberg Institute for School Reform

The Annenberg Institute for School Reform (AISR) at Brown University works in collaboration with education reform organizations, school districts, school-improvement networks, and education funds to develop the capacity of urban communities to build and sustain programs and policies that improve teaching and learning. UEP students Charlotte North and David Margolis will work on AISR's review of the mathematics learning systems in Pawtucket, RI, with a particular focus on the post-primary grades when academic achievement begins to decline, particularly for poor children of color and English Language Learners.

The Big Picture Company

The Big Picture Company, based in Providence, is dedicated to helping communities across the country open small schools that provide students with individual learning plans and real-world internship opportunities. UEP student Kate Wieland will work with the Big Picture Company's National Director to assist the Camden, New Jersey School District in its efforts to create new small schools based on the Big Picture philosophy.

Bradford Dunn Institute/CVS Highlander Charter School

Founded in 1999, the mission of the Bradford Dunn Institute is to help all children with learning differences be successful by providing training for teachers, services for students, and resources for families and the community. As part of its efforts to reach low-income public school students, who often do not have access to high-quality instructional methods for addressing learning differences, the Institute is planning to open a charter high school in Providence in September 2007. UEP student Dana Borrelli, who is interested in charter school development, will assist the Institute in this high school initiative. *continued on page 4*

student internships **The Education Alliance** The Education Alliance at Brown University helps schools and school districts provide equitable opportunities for all students to succeed by applying research findings and developing solutions to problems in such areas as school change, professional development, and first and second language acquisition. UEP student Janet Santos will be conducting research in the areas of family/community engagement and culturally responsive teaching.

The Education Department at Brown University UEP student Patrick Fahy will work with Education Department Chair John Tyler, economics doctoral students Jill Berk and Svetla Vitanova, the Rhode Island Director of Adult Education, and staff at the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training to design and administer an employer survey. The purpose of the survey is to determine what minimum cognitive and non-cognitive skills are required for entry level jobs that require no college education or vocational certification, determine whether and the extent to which there is a shortage of these skills in Rhode Island among individuals applying for these types of jobs, and to elicit employer beliefs about the relative value of a high school diploma versus a GED certification in the absence of good information on potential productivity.

The Education Partnership/Providence After School Alliance (PASA) The Providence After School Alliance, an initiative of Providence Mayor David Cicilline, works to expand and improve after-school opportunities for Providence youth by building a system of neighborhood campuses called AfterZones. UEP student Christian Caldarone will conduct an asset map of each of the five AfterZones being created throughout the city in order to help PASA determine how successfully it is tapping critical resources.

Providence Public Schools Serving 26,000 students and families, the Providence Public Schools is the largest, and most diverse, K-12 public system in Rhode Island. Under the direction of Superintendent Donnie Evans, UEP student Joshua Marland will conduct policy and best practice research that will inform central office decision-making on strategic district-wide initiatives.

Faculty Features



Rosa Cho

Newly hired Assistant Professor Rosa Cho comes to the Education Department from the Irving B. Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago where she has been researching the effect of maternal incarceration on children's educational outcomes. Her research interests include **program evaluation, education policy, child and family policy, and criminal justice policy as it relates to education**. Professor Cho will teach the new UEP course, Quantitative Research Methods and Data Analysis.

Marty West

Newly hired Assistant Professor Marty West is a Harvard-trained political scientist who was a Research Fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution for this past year, as well as serving as the research editor and a regular contributor to Education Next, a journal of opinion and research on education policy. His research interests include **state and federal education policy and politics, teacher unions and collective bargaining, school accountability and school choice, and school finance litigation**. Professor West will teach the new UEP Policy Analysis course.



Important Dates

- **Education Reform Forum; Mayor's Conference:** October 13, 2006. Biltmore Hotel, Providence, RI
- **Information Sessions at Brown University, Fall 2006:** October 16 & November 13, 2006
- **Application/Financial Aid Application due:** January 2, 2007

Get started applying today!

Visit our website at:
http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Education/uep_admissions.php

This is an exciting time to be a part of the Urban Education Policy Program. Faculty and students are engaged in important policy work and research that can influence local and national agendas and approaches to urban education. There are several ways in which you can join this effort: If you are interested in applying to the UEP program, please contact Ann D'Abrosca at Ann_D'Abrosca@Brown.edu. To learn more about internships, contact Lamont Gordon at Lamont_Gordon@Brown.edu. To learn more about giving to the UEP program, contact Ken Wong at Ken_Wong@Brown.edu.

Stay tuned for our spring newsletter in which you will find:

- updates of the 2006-7 internships
- UEP faculty bios/snapshots
- excitement about the 2007-8 incoming graduate class!

Be well and be in touch!

Sincerely,



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