

The Administrator

A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA CITY AND COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2011, ISSUE 3

Hewett selected for Ferguson scholarship

Douglas J. Hewett, Fayetteville assistant city manager, has been selected by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), as the 2011 recipient of The Ferguson Group scholarship to the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) Senior Executives in State & Local Government Program. Hewett will attend the program this summer.

The HKS program provides a unique opportunity to challenge conventional thinking, thought processes and the values that drive leadership decisions. It's an opportunity for senior-level city and county managers and assistants to experience personal and professional renewal.

The Ferguson Group, which represents public and private interests across the country before Congress and federal agencies, has committed to funding the full cost of tuition for



an ICMA member to attend the HKS Program for the next three years beginning in 2011.

"It is critical for city and county managers to... renew their creative thought processes," says High Point City Manager Stribling P. Boynton. "The [Harvard Kennedy School Program] was the freshest and most challenging three weeks in my career and the single best investment of my time and dollars."

Fayetteville City Manager Dale Iman states, "I am extremely proud of Doug for having been selected for this fellowship and want to thank The Ferguson Group and ICMA for making it possible. I have worked closely with Doug for

the past five years and I'm certain that he will represent the city of Fayetteville, state of North Carolina and ICMA with distinction among his peers at Harvard. As a 2006 fellow of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, I can honestly say that the memories and lessons learned will stay with me forever and represent the highlight of my academic career."

A graduate of North Carolina State University, Hewett began his tenure with the city of Fayetteville in 2004 and became assistant city manager in 2007. Prior to joining Fayetteville, he served in Halifax County (1996-99) and the city of Wilmington (1999-2004).

In 2010, he was named recipient of ICMA's Assistant Excellence in Leadership Award in Memory of Buford M. Watson, Jr., which honors

Continued on page 3

Cabarrus County's Jones honored for civic leadership

Cabarrus County 4-H agent Heather Jones was recently honored as the citizen recipient of the N.C. Center for Voter Education's Spectrum of Democracy Award.

Jones attended one of the N.C. City and County Management Association (NCCCMA)'s Local Government Seminars and used the tools and resources from this seminar to build an amazing, collaborative civic education program in Cabarrus County. Among many of the projects in Jones' program is a local government career fair that reached 600 students this year. Outstanding Media Organization.

"I think the award is wonderful recognition

for the NCCCMA, 4-H and Heather because her efforts were the result of her attendance to a summer seminar hosted by the Civics Education Project," said Kannapolis Assistant City Manager Eddie Smith, chair of the NCCCMA Civic Education Project Committee. "She continues to work hard on promoting civics in Cabarrus County through her Citizenship Focus seminars that enjoy participation from the elected officials and staff at the county, city, and school levels."

Jones attended North Carolina 4-H Citizenship Focus, the NCCCMA Local Government Seminar, and took part in discus-

sions concerning young people and youth involvement in local government with lawmakers and county commissioners during the summer of 2009. The aforementioned led to the creation and implementation of Cabarrus 4-H Citizenship Focus.

It was determined young people need an opportunity to learn more about local government through discussions with young people, civics teachers, county commissioners and the Cabarrus County Cooperative Extension Youth Advisory Council. After determining a

Continued on page 3

Building an ethical culture

Reprinted with permission from Public Management (PM) magazine, published by ICMA, the premier local government management organization, Washington, D.C. Contact the ICMA Ethics Center at 202/962-3521 or visit ICMA.org/ethics.

March reminds us of spring, St. Patrick's Day, baseball, and ethics. Ethics? Well, perhaps not so much. By some authority, March is now National Ethics Awareness Month. As members of a profession with a long, dedicated track record of ethical conduct, let's make the most of this declaration to improve the ethical culture of local government. Here is a straightforward approach that works:

1 . Lead by example. In the mundane everyday activities as well as in the challenging moments, you set the standard and tone for the organization. Want to inspire your staff to the highest standard of conduct? Then model the conduct you want to see in others. And when errors or missteps happen, demonstrate true accountability by taking personal responsibility and fixing the problem.

2 . Be clear about values and acceptable conduct. ICMA members can look to the ICMA Code of Ethics for values-based guidance on the right course of action. Staff members who belong to other professional associations with a code of

ethics get similar assistance. But absent membership in a professional association that has adopted a code of ethics, employees are left without any guidance if the organization fails to define its core values and the behaviors that support those values.

Defining the values not only provides individuals with some essential guidance on what's expected and what's right but also gives them the platform to raise a challenge when the conduct of others falls out of alignment with the values.

The city of Mountain View, California, just completed a successful process based on the correct assumption that for values to be truly accepted by the employees the process must be bottom-up. Although the effort was coordinated from the city manager's office, a team of 20 self-selected individuals led the effort.

After receiving some training on ethics and facilitation, team members led workshops that included ethics education along with exercises to define the city's code. Some 25 percent of the workforce chose to participate actively in the process.

As Kevin Duggan, city manager of Mountain View, noted, "While we ended up with a clear and simple code that we are proud of, we also ended up with a substantial part of our organization who is better informed regarding ethical issues and potential pitfalls and has ownership



(and pride) in the code. While you can never be precise about the outcome, and there are no silver bullets to avoid ethical problems, we have many more staff members informed and aware of the ethical issues that abound in our everyday activities."

3 . Have good internal policies. Common ethical missteps can be avoided by simply having management put into place clear, simple policies for staff. And elected officials should follow suit. Does the organization have in place policies to address:

- Conflicts of interest.
 - Political activity... how and when it is okay.
 - Limitations on accepting gifts.
 - Merit-based hiring.
 - Credit card use.
 - Use of local vehicles, computers, cell phones.
 - Social media.
- Are there others that you have found essential?

Continued on page 3

Calendar of Events

NCCCMA Summer Seminar
June 23-25, 2011
Sea Trail
Brunswick County

NACo Annual Conference
July 15-19, 2011
Oregon Convention Center
Multnomah County, Ore.

NCACC Annual Conference
August 18-21, 2011
Embassy Suites Hotel &
Concord Convention Center
Cabarrus County

NCLM Annual Conference
October 23-25, 2011
Raleigh Convention Center

The Administrator is a monthly newsletter of the North Carolina City and County Management Association, a professional association for city and county managers and assistant managers from counties and municipalities throughout the state of North Carolina.

For comments or suggestions, please contact Matt Lail, editor, at (919) 715-3929, fax to (919) 733-9519, or mlail@ncclm.org.



Civic engagement, continued from page 1

need for such a program, Jones targeted two high school civics teachers from two different Cabarrus County schools to partner with on Cabarrus 4-H Citizenship Focus. Under her leadership, the three met and planned the program.

“The goal of the program is to enhance what students are learning in the classroom and give real-life application to the civics course standards,” she said. “Other objectives of the program are to make students aware of careers in local government, promote youth-adult partnerships and convince students of the importance of their participation in local government.”

As a way to communicate the benefits of the program to school administrators, Jones created a one-page flyer outlining the program components and listing the standards the program will help teach.

The program consisted of three parts while students visited the Cabarrus County Governmental Center. During the visit, the students participated in a budget simulation activity with county finance officers, a panel discussion with elected officials and interviewed various county employees.

Prior to the program, Jones visited



Students from Mount Pleasant High School and Northwest High School interacted with Mike Downs, deputy Cabarrus County manager, through one-on-one conversation.

Continued on page 4

Hewett, continued from page 1

a local government management professional who has made significant contributions toward excellence in leadership as an assistant to a chief local government administrator or department head.

An independent review panel comprised of

ICMA members who have participated in the Harvard program in the past chose Hewett from among a candidate pool of 33 applicants. Applications for the 2012 program will be accepted by ICMA starting in the fall of 2011.

Direct questions to:
TFGHarvardScholarship@icma.org, or Felicia Littky at 202-962-3656.

Ethics, continued from page 2

4. Conduct training. Like the many other topics organizations regularly cover in their mandatory training regime, ethics training is part of a preventive, not reactive, strategy. Regular training builds awareness of common ethical issues, provides tools for effective problem solving, and, yes, can even inspire someone to do the right thing when faced with a difficult ethical dilemma.

Training includes both formal organization-wide efforts and informal opportunities at the department and team levels. Remember that it is a myth that good people always make wise choices.

An effective training program answers these two key questions: “Where do I go for advice? Where do I go to report a problem?” Leadership is responsible for creating a safe and responsive environment, outside the chain of command, for staff who want guidance or need to report an issue. Do this right and you might actually decrease the need for someone to blow the whistle by giving leadership advance warning and the opportunity to address ethically troubling activities that are under the radar.

The linchpin for any successful effort to build

an ethical culture is the leadership. Remember Enron? The company had an impressive code of ethics for the organization, but leadership failed completely at modeling the conduct expressed in the code—with disastrous results.

Ethics Awareness Month is a good time for local government leaders to demonstrate that they take ethics and the culture of the organization seriously.

—Martha Perego
ICMA Ethics Director
Washington, D.C.
mperego@icma.org

NCCU EMPA info session to be held April 13

N.C. Central University's Executive Master's of Public Administration Program (EMPA) will hold an informational session on April 13 from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Whiting Criminal Justice Building, Second Floor, room 202.

The EMPA program is an 18-month, accelerated Master's degree program designed for mid-career and senior-level professionals who wish to continue with their careers while com-

pleting this accelerated course of study.

The program is designed for those that have: five years of professional, executive or supervisory experience in the public, private or nonprofit sector; and a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

The academic program structure consists of no GRE; holistic admission; weekend classes only; cohort, team concept learning; and dedi-

cated faculty.

The next cohort starts June 2011, so contact NCCU now if you are interested. Contact either Donnell Scott, Ed.D., EMPA director, at 919-530-5192, or Sandra Brunson at 919-530-7532.

Civic engagement, continued from page 3

each civics class participating in order to prepare them. Jones shared the plan for the day, how to dress appropriately, how to address officials and helped the students create questions for the employees and elected officials.

Students wrote thank you notes to county employees and elected officials in addition to completing evaluations following Cabarrus 4-H Citizenship Focus.

The first Cabarrus 4-H Citizenship Focus took place in the fall of 2009. Twenty-nine volunteers took part in the program; including mayors, school board members, commissioners, a councilman, county employees and extension volunteers.

As a result of participating in the program, 85 percent of the students reported they now understand their citizenship responsibilities in the community. Thirty-one of the 55 students reported being more confident talking with elected officials and 44 percent will encourage adults they know to vote in local elections.

The program was replicated in the spring of 2010 with nearly 200 civics students participating. At the conclusion of this program, the chair of the county commissioners commented, "We need to be doing this with all the high schools." Almost 800 students participated in the Fall 2010 semester.

Life skills taught during this program include oral and written communication, planning and organizing, responsible citizenship, accepting



Jones (left), with Sen. Fletcher Hartsell (third from left), and Cabarrus County 4-Hers Ella Beth Wickliff (second from left) and Taylor Furr, at the 2010 NC 4-H Citizenship Focus.

differences, social skills and self-responsibility.

"Cabarrus 4-H Citizenship Focus is a great avenue to teach life skills as well as what is relevant to young people in the classroom."

Jones has a bachelor's degree in Child and Family Studies and Master's in Early Childhood Education.

"I have worked in camping, as a Head Start teacher and a community college instructor. I first learned about Cooperative Extension/4-H when I did an internship with a county extension office for my undergraduate degree. I have been in this position of 4-H Extension Agent in Cabarrus County since July 2007. In this role, I serve as the county 4-H leader for our clubs, 4-H programs in schools, camps and other enrichment experiences.

"Each day is different for me. One day may consist of training teachers, working on reports

and visiting young people at a youth development center. North Carolina 4-H's goal is to produce citizen leaders as we teach life skills. We do this through a variety of methods."

Jones admits she didn't have much experience with civic education prior to getting involved with the NCCCM Local Government Seminar.

"North Carolina 4-H has a statewide Citizenship Focus program for teens each summer," she said. "The young people attend workshops on state government and meet with state legislators

at this event. This event and conversations with co-workers led me to attend the workshop.

"The most valuable thing I got from the workshop was an opportunity to build relationships with Civics teachers and city officials. These relationships and the practical, hands-on activities and resources we were provided laid the groundwork for Cabarrus 4-H Citizenship Focus. The partnerships are critical and I am thankful for such a great collaborative effort."

Others honored with the Spectrum of Democracy Award were Bill Gilkeson, former N.C. General Assembly staff attorney, who won the Robert Morgan Service Award; Raleigh City Council Member Bonner Gaylor, who won the Outstanding Public Servant Award; and NBC-17, a Raleigh-based television station, in the Outstanding Media Organization category.