The continued value of an institution is reflected in its alumni and their contributions to the greater society. The graduate programs of the School of Public Affairs (SPA) at American University (AU) have generated an alumni network of more than 5,000 people. We are particularly proud of the impact our alumni have made in the field of public service, broadly defined.

At SPA, the top rated school of public affairs in the greater Washington, D.C., area, we have focused on designing a curriculum that is both rigorous and relevant. Our alumni frequently comment on how the instruction they received at AU successfully combined academic challenges with practical applicability. Undoubtedly, Washington provides a wonderful locale for learning, and as you can see here, our alumni and entire SPA community take full advantage of it.

Please join us in celebrating the many public service contributions of our alumni. From prominent roles in state and local government, to the private sector, to the U.S. Congress, SPA alumni are leading change and shaping our world. They exemplify the best of American University.
James McGovern is serving his fourth term in the U.S. Congress. McGovern has been elected by his New England colleagues to the House Democratic leadership team as a regional whip, and he is the third-ranking Democrat on the powerful House Rules Committee. In Congress, he has championed several education initiatives, including a bill to increase grant assistance for college students and their families. McGovern also has led the fight on issues of health care, the environment, Social Security, and human rights.
Mary Starks Neal provides daily policy guidance and leadership for the full integration of agricultural inspection programs into the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and ports of entry. The programs focus on preventing the entry of foreign pests and diseases that are harmful to U.S. plant and animal resources.

"My experience at AU greatly expanded my knowledge of the managerial, legal, and business strategies essential for leading people. The instructors and materials were current and relevant to what I have experienced as a federal employee and manager. I have advanced in my career and, without pause, have accepted the challenges of leading during times of historic change in government. The course of study at AU reinforced my belief that personal integrity is as important to public service as technical skills and knowledge."
Troy Springer currently conducts criminal investigations relating to programs and operations of the U.S. Department of Labor. He focuses on labor racketeering and corruption within labor unions by organized crime.

“The internship and co-op I attained through AU provided me with experience and skills in a real world environment. AU also gave me a wealth of networking contacts that I continue to use in my current employment. I selected AU based on its Washington, D.C., location and the reputation of the Justice, Law & Society program within the law enforcement community.”
Pam Iorio began her career at age 26, when she became the youngest person ever elected to the Hillsborough County Commission in Florida. After being elected chair a year later, Iorio served two terms and later was elected supervisor of elections for Hillsborough County three times. In 2000, she was elected president of the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections, becoming the spokesperson for the supervisors during the 2000 election. In 2002, for her work in the area of election reform, Iorio received the Leadership Florida Distinguished Alumnus Award, which recognizes statewide efforts to better the lives of Floridians.

"Living in Washington, D.C., and attending American University gave me the opportunity to see politics from a national and international perspective. It was always stimulating and definitely broadened my experience. Having a career in public service gives me the opportunity to help make life better for others, to help shape the community for the better. AU was an important influence on my career and life."
Eric Korsvall manages the conservative think tank's building operations, residential housing, commercial tenants, construction, catering, security, and emergency preparedness. For the past year, he has been involved in a $10 million building project that will double the size of the foundation's Capitol Hill headquarters and offer year-round housing to 60 interns.

"The MPA program gave me a solid foundation to succeed in my current position and to manage an organization whose bottom line is not making money. The Heritage Foundation is a $30 million nonprofit, and although it is run like a business, we must measure our performance on something other than profit. Creating measurable goals that are aligned with the organizational mission allows me to have an impact on the success of the organization without being in a policy position. I regularly tap into the knowledge I gained from my MPA courses, whether it is in setting the direction of my department, making important staffing decisions, or budgeting for large capital projects."
Theodore Carter plans and implements large-scale economic development initiatives in support of the company's broad statutory mission of revitalizing neighborhoods in Washington, D.C. Prior to joining the National Capital Revitalization Corporation, Carter served as campaign manager for the 2002 election campaign of D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams. From 1997 to 2000, Carter was the deputy assistant secretary of management operations for the U.S. Department of the Treasury. He oversaw the department’s five law enforcement bureaus and a $4 billion portfolio. He was also the department executive for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives headquarters development. As deputy campaign manager and chief operating officer for the Clinton-Gore reelection campaign in 1996, he managed the day-to-day operations of a $100 million enterprise. Prior to moving to Washington, Carter held several senior staff positions in the offices of New York City mayors David Dinkins and Rudolph Giuliani.

“ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF MY EXPERIENCE AT AU’S SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS WAS THAT MANY STUDENTS BROUGHT A CUTTING EDGE PERSPECTIVE INTO THE CLASSROOM FROM THEIR DAY JOBS AND OTHER ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES. AS A RESULT, EACH COURSE WAS A LABORATORY WHERE REAL LIFE PROBLEMS WERE DEBATED AND NEW IDEAS WERE TESTED. FACILITATED BY AU’S TOP-NOTCH FACULTY, MY CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES HAVE BEEN INVALUABLE TO ME IN MY LEADERSHIP ROLES IN BOTH THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS.”
Mary Garrand oversees the analysis of all crimes in densely populated Alexandria, Virginia. In addition to supervising the Crime Analysis Unit, Garrand examines crime trends and patterns through statistical analysis and mapping. She produces weekly, monthly, and yearly reports on these trends and patterns for patrol deployment and investigations. Prior to her employment at the Alexandria Police Department, Garrand worked for the Fairfax County Police Department in Virginia and the Justice Research and Statistics Association in Washington, D.C.

"AU gave me a broad knowledge base of the criminal justice system through diverse classes. The Career Center helped me narrow my interests to a few fields within the criminal justice community. The internship opportunities and the large alumni network helped me find a great position upon graduation."
Fred Turner

“Through knowledge obtained and contacts made, my AU experience led directly to my first job on Capitol Hill and, ultimately, to my current one. I cannot overemphasize the value of the relationships that you will develop with AU’s professors. They are not only outstanding teachers, but also well respected outside the ivory tower. These relationships continue to benefit me professionally.”
Jeffrey Banks is responsible for the implementation of various aspects of the Social Security Act, specifically those policies dealing with retirement, survivors and disability insurance, Social Security numbers, and supplemental security income. In 1999, Banks was accepted into the Presidential Management Program, and in 2000, he received the Deputy Commission's Citation for coordinating an outreach program to national youth organizations. Banks is especially proud of his work with the Social Security Administration in assisting families affected by the September 11 tragedy.

“I worked closely with the AU Career Center staff from the first moment I arrived at American University in January 1998. They assisted me in realizing that a career in public service would fulfill me, both personally and professionally. The professors and staff were receptive to discussing what my options could be in public service. I feel so fulfilled knowing that I make a difference in people’s lives. This is the same philosophy I try to instill in my staff at Social Security.”
Isis Jones provides critical training to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) managers and supervisors to further the bureau's goal of preventing terrorism. Jones also prepares and gives briefings to top executives within the Counterterrorism Division. Prior to working for the FBI, Jones completed an internship in the Government Relations Office of the Association of National Advertisers.

"The courses at AU provided me with a strong foundation of knowledge about legal institutions, management, and policy. Learning the methods of data analysis contributed to my overall problem solving and critical evaluation skill sets."
Shannon Kelly helps facilitate the annual budget process for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies and evaluates the performance of HHS programs. She is a member of Pi Alpha Alpha honor society and received an SPA graduate assistantship.

“THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS was instrumental with regard to my PMI [PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT INTERN] application and interview process. In addition, I developed mentoring relationships with professors who helped me focus on where I wanted to go after graduation. Being at the top ranked school of its kind in Washington, D.C., gave me the access to opportunities that I was looking for in my chosen field, through both internships and full-time employment upon graduation.”
As Senator Feinstein’s field representative in northern California, Michael Walker advises the senator on local issues and facilitates dialogue between local communities and the federal government. In addition, Walker prepares briefs for the senator and assists in solving problems for local governments, businesses, and individual constituents. While attending AU, Walker worked in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging. In 1998, he was part of a team that received the Secretary of Health and Human Services Distinguished Service Award for its work on healthcare fraud, waste, and abuse.

“I was brought up in an environment where public service was looked at with skepticism. But after working in the public sector and attending AU, I have come to believe that there is no more noble cause than serving on behalf of the public. The knowledge and understanding I gained at AU about public policy analysis, the theory behind the policy process, and its applicability to real world problems have been instrumental in my current professional responsibilities.”
NOTABLE SPA ALUMNI
LEADERS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
Kenneth Bentsen, former congressman (D-TX), MPA/SPA ’85
Robert Engle, executive director, Committee for Effective Congress, BA/SPA ’82
Susan K. Hattan, staff director, Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, M A in political science/SPA ’77
Donald A. Marzullo, congressman (R-IL), BA/SPA ’67
Kenneth A. Mathison, senior deputy chair, National Endowment for the Arts, MPA/SPA ’90
Barry R. McCaffrey, retired general and national drug policy director, MA in political science/SPA ’71
James McGovern, congressman (D-MA), BA/SPA ’67
Pam Iorio, mayor, Tampa, Florida, BA/SPA ’81
John A. Locke, state representative, Massachusetts, BA/SPA ’82
Helene Weinstein, assemblywoman, New York State Assembly, BA/SPA ’73

H. Arthur Sauer, deputy director, House Committee on the Budget, BA/SPA ’69
Mark A. Amorello, state senator, Massachusetts, BA/SPA ’79
T. Theodore Carasou, inspector general, M A in political science/SPA ’75
Hubert Humphrey III, attorney general, Minnesota, BA/SPA ’82
Pam Iorio, mayor, Tampa, Florida, BA/SPA ’82
John A. Locke, state representative, Massachusetts, BA/SPA ’82
Richard M. Tisei, state senator, Massachusetts, BA/SPA ’82
Helene Weinstein, assemblywoman, New York State Assembly, BA/SPA ’73

Law and Business
Stephen Brown, vice president, The Dutko Group, BA/SPA ’77
Carroll A. Campbell, president and chief executive officer, American Council of Life Insurance; former governor, South Carolina, M A in political science/SPA ’85
Pamela D. Duse, partner and cochair, Dorsey & Whitney, LLP, BS/SPA ’80, JD/WCL ’83
Ken D. Duberstein, managing director, The Duberstein Group, former chief of staff to President Ronald Reagan, MA in political science/SPA ’65
Susan DeWitt, management consultant, BA/SPA ’65, M SH/SPA ’80
David Finkelstein, attorney, Finkelstein & Bash; former deputy director, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, BA/SPA ’68
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Chung Sook Park, former ambassador to Japan, former minister of foreign affairs and trade, South Korea, MA/CAS ’61, PhD/SPA ’65

MEDIA, SPORTS, AND ENTERTAINMENT
Carlos Cisneros, chairman and chief executive officer, Cisneros Television Group, BA/SPA ’90
Betsy Fischer, executive producer, M at the Pres, BA/SPA ’92, M S/D ’96
Joel Glazer, executive vice president, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, BA/SPA ’90
Frank Herzog, sports anchor, WUSA-TV 9, Washington, D.C., BA/SPA ’90
Al Koken, talk show host, WTEM Sports Talk Radio, BS/SPA ’74
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James McGovern, congressman (D-MA), BA/CAS ’61, MPA/SPA ’84
Anthony Pajunas, manager of logistics, U. S. Postal Service, MPA/SPA ’99
Pearlie S. Reed, acting assistant secretary for administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, MPA/SPA ’80
Alan J. Roth, staff director and chief counsel, House Committee on Commerce, BA/SPA ’75
H. Arthur Sauer, deputy director, House Committee on the Budget, BA/SPA ’69
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FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- Budget analyst
- Contract specialist
- Employee development or relations specialist
- Intelligence analyst
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- Policy analyst
- Program analyst
- Public affairs specialist
- Research assistant

CAMPAIGNING, POLLING, AND LEGISLATING
- Campaign manager
- Committee staff member
- Consultant
- Event planner
- Fundraiser
- Government affairs specialist
- Legislative correspondent, assistant, or director

GOVERNMENTAL CONSULTING
- Business process consultant
- Change management consultant
- Human resources consultant
- Technical consultant

RESEARCH AND THINK TANKS
- Policy analyst
- Program analyst
- Research associate

NONPROFIT SECTOR
- Advocate
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- Grant writer
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As the top rated school of public affairs in the greater Washington, D.C., area, AU is well positioned physically, academically, and professionally. Our prime Washington location places us in the midst of the most important political institutions of our day. Situated at the top of Embassy Row, AU not only offers all the amenities of an urban university, such as metro accessibility, cultural opportunities, and numerous housing options, but also provides the security and comfort of a campus community. While AU is among the oldest academic institutions in the city, the many updated facilities reflect its modern day presence and participation as a leader in the field of higher education. Our personalized and intimate setting sets the stage for learning, debate, and growth. At AU, we are responsive to our students and it shows—through our alumni support, the school-wide sense of community, and the mentoring and learning opportunities that take place both inside and outside the classroom.

AU’s faculty are distinguished scholars and practitioners. We emphasize a balance between teaching and research, which you will benefit from as a student. Many of our faculty hold positions with leading associations in their respective fields and are called upon to be presenters at conferences and speaking engagements, both domestic and abroad. In addition, our faculty are commonly cited in research publications and in the news media, such as NPR, CSPAN, MSNBC, CNN, Fox News, Newsweek, and USA Today.

AU’s professional positioning is evident from its distinguished alumni and friends of the school. With more than 5,000 graduate alumni from the School of Public Affairs, AU extends its reach into almost every professional domain. AU’s various advisory council members, trustees, alumni, and other friends are among today’s most influential leaders. We connect them to students through numerous networking engagements, lecture series events, and mentoring opportunities.

AU really does have it all. No other public affairs graduate program can claim a prime Washington location and a top ranking by U.S. News and World Report (AU is ranked 12th overall out of 249 schools of public affairs). These benefits, combined with distinguished faculty and connected alumni, shape the AU advantage.