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St. Mary's University

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY



Message From the Director

Year of Chaminade!

St. Mary's University and the MPA program find themselves amidst the year long celebration of the 250th anniversary of [Blessed William Joseph Chaminade](#), the founder of the Society of Mary. Chaminade called for Marianist institutions to educate for the formation in faith; provide an integral quality education; educate in the family spirit; educate for service, justice and peace; and educate for adaptation and change.

It is fitting that our program has come to embrace Scholar-in-Residence and former City of San Antonio City Manager, Alex Briseño's pedagogical focus: "Gerencia Con Corazon"—practice management with compassion/heart. This focus embodies the Marianist's ideals of education and public service and, in many ways, anchors our program. Inside this newsletter you'll learn how our students and faculty have put these ideals to practice in pursuing careers in public service in urban management and public policy.

In all, I think Fr. Chaminade would be pleased by his legacy and our continued efforts to meet his call for communities of faith and education.

Art Vega

MPA Faculty

Alex Briseño, M.A., Scholar-in-Residence, and former City Manager, City of San Antonio. Teaches the Introduction to Public Administration and Policy and Management of Municipal Budgets courses.

Monica Cruz, MPAff, Adjunct Professor and Assistant Director, University McNair Program. Teaches Policy Formulation and Implementation and Local Politics and Conflict Resolution.

Henry Flores, Ph.D., Dean of the Graduate School and Professor; Dean Flores teaches research methods, urban politics and governance.

Frank Garza, J.D., Adjunct Professor, former City Attorney for City of San Antonio; currently works with Davidson & Troilo, where he is Chair of the firm's Practice Management Committee and Public Law Sector. Teaches Ethics and Municipal Law.

Steve Neiheisel, Ph.D., Professor, teaches Leadership,

Organizational Culture and Behavior; Non-Profit leadership and Social Entrepreneurship.

Arturo Vega, Ph.D., Director MPA Graduate Program and Associate Professor. Teaches research methods, program evaluation and urban planning

Felix Marquez, MS (StMU '90 MPA; '87 Political Science), Administrative Officer with the Edwards Aquifer Authority. Mr. Marquez taught Human Resource management.



Alex Briseño, Public Service Professor

Public Administrators need to learn to practice management with a heart. "Gerencia Con Corazon" -Alex Briseño



Willie Ng

Faculty Recognition

Professor of Public Service in Residence is Recognized

Professor of Public Service in Residence Alex Briseño has been recognized by the Texas City Management Association (TCMA) as a "Legacy Leader." The TCMA Legacy Leaders Project was formed to capture historical documentation of forerunners to the council-manager form of government in the State of Texas. Briseño and others were recognized in June at their TCMA Annual Conference

Before retiring, Briseño was a public servant for the City of San Antonio for 24 years including serving as City Manager for 11 years. He joined St. Mary's faculty in the Spring of 2002 as a Professor of Public Service in Residence. Briseño teaches graduate courses in the Public Administration program drawing upon his years of public service experience.

**THE PROGRAM'S T-SHIRTS WERE LAUNCHED:
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (FRONT) —WE RUN THIS CITY (BACK
WITH CITY SKYLINE)**

CONTACT HZAPATA@MAIL.STMARYTX.EDU TO ORDER YOURS

Texas City Management Association Region 8 Meeting

The Public Administration program hosted the TCMA Region 8 monthly meeting on campus on Friday, November 19.

The program's guest speaker was Dr. Steve Nivin, Director and Chief Economist of the Saber Institute, who presented a regional economic update.

MPA students met and networked with regional city managers at this event.



The Willie Ng Scholarship

The **Willie Ng Scholarship** was established on December 21, 2009, and is intended to provide assistance for Masters of Public Administration students in the amount of \$1,000 for each semester starting in Spring 2010. The scholarship shall be used for tuition, books, or fees. The purpose of this scholarship is to reward dedicated MPA students who wish to make an impact on their

community. To be considered for this scholarship, candidates must:

- Have completed at least 12 graduate credit hours in public administration
- Submit a 500 word essay describing the reasons they deserve the scholarship, what they plan on doing with their MPA

after graduation and how they plan on making a difference in their community.

The scholarship will be awarded again during the Spring Semester 2011!

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS — JESUS GARZA, MPA 10

As the first City Administrator of Von Ormy TX, I am tasked to implement a Master Parks Plan and Master Infrastructure Plan that will tackle most of the issues facing Von Ormy. The Master Parks Plan includes the planning of a Town Center to include the City's first City Hall, providing a permanent location for the Mayor, City Council and City staff to operate from. The plan also includes City Parks that will include playgrounds & walking trails providing residents a place to participate in recreational activities and offers grounds for Von Ormy's annual Jalapeno Festival.

Von Ormy, TX was incorporated in 2008, and since then the City has been able to focus on public safety by creating a City Marshall's Department, passing a Animal Control Ordinance, and partnering with the Jarret Volunteer Fire Department. It is my responsibility to insure that all of these departments have the equipment and processes in place that will allow them to be effective.

Some of the challenges facing Von Ormy go beyond public safety concerns: Von Ormy does not rely on an adequate sewer/drainage system, a problem which is being addressed with the Master Infrastructure Plan. Consequently, commercial development is minimal and practically nonexistent, thus the City's revenue is minimal as well. With only a budget of nearly \$300,000, it makes the aforementioned tasks difficult to accomplish and, as such, pursuing federal grants is priority as a means of accomplishing our goals in Von Ormy.

It is evident that much work needs to be done in Von Ormy and while my tasks as City Administrator may seem daunting, I am confident that I will be able to work together with the Mayor, City Council and other stakeholders to accomplish them. Having gone through the Urban Management tract of the MPA program at St. Mary's University, I feel even more confident thanks to the knowledge gained throughout the program. Additionally, I strongly believe the relationships I have with professors and peers are proving to be more beneficial as I jump start my career. As an alumnus, I have the full support of my former professors and, in fact, have reached out to them in some capacities already and was received with open arms and a willingness to provide advice and feedback.

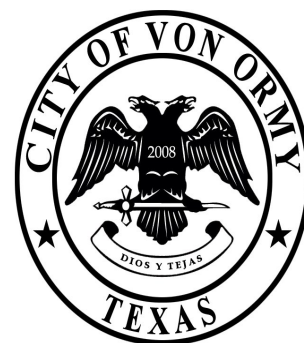
Similarly, I want to serve as a resource to all of you and I encourage you to stay tuned with Von Ormy's progress as it continues to evolve into a developed community. Von Ormy presents us all an opportunity to witness and learn what it entails to develop a municipality from the ground up.

If you are interested in learning more about Von Ormy and would be interested in an internship opportunity for the Spring 2011 semester please do not hesitate to email me: jesus.garza@vonormytexas.com



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-Jesus Garza



Student Internships - Active and Varied

Graduating student **Christina Mares** interned with City of San Antonio Council person **Ray Lopez** and District 6. Mares conducted research, attended City Council meetings, managed constituent correspondence, and assisted in the planning of community events. She also wrote press releases, and assisted in the publications of the district newsletter and email blasts. Mares worked with city staff with policy initiatives that were presented to the Mayor and City Manager.

James Massey interned with Kathryn Word, City Administrator for the City of Von Ormy last summer. Massey aided in the drafting of the City's Code of Ordinances and assisted in the formation of Leadership Von Ormy, which was designed to help cultivate future leaders for the City, and the Southwest I-35 Development Coalition which organized towns and counties who are most affected by the development along the SW I-35 area. Massey also reviewed and recommended a number of potential ordinances to be undertaken and enforced by the City of Von Ormy.

From June of 2010 to October 2010, graduating student **Isaac Hinojosa** interned at the City of San Antonio Mayor's Office under Mayor Julian Castro. His duties consisted of participating in strategic planning sessions for some of the Mayors initiatives, including the Green and Healthy Home Initiative, Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative, SA2020, HUD, and Small Business Initiative. Hinojosa researched material to draw up talking points for the Mayor at the National Council of La Raza and attended focus group meetings. He created surveys for the small business initiative to highlight policy issues between banks and small businesses.

Faisal Alghadooni interned with the San Antonio Water Systems and prepared a comparative study of water utility practices in "America's 10 Thirstiest Cities."

Valerie Cobos is an Intergovernmental and Community Relations Intern with the San Antonio River Authority. She will be monitoring SARA's legislative agenda for the 82th Texas Legislative Session as well as the 112th Congress.

Student Accolades

- **David Zapata** was awarded this year's MPA Graduate Assistantship.
- Congratulations also to **Kavita Bhalla** and **Jesus Garza** who were inducted last Spring as the inaugural members of the St. Mary's University Chapter of *Pi Alpha Alpha*, the Public Affairs and Administration National Honor Society.
- Last fall's *Pi Alpha Alpha* inductees included **Faisal Alghadooni**, **Christina Mares**, **James Massey**, **Dianne Pipes**, **Melissa Portugal**, and **Valerie Cobos**.
- MPA folks who ran in 2010 San Antonio Marathon included: Gabriel Hernandez, Missy Portugal, Andrea Ortiz, Prof. Garza and Dr. Vega

Graduates

- Congratulations to Spring 2010 Graduates: **Jesus Garza**, **Leticia Vela**, **Sherita Simmons** and **Dominic Favela**.

Eleven Fall 2010 Graduates:

- **Faisal Alghadooni**
- **Kavita Bhalla**
- **Amanda Cuevas**
- **Gabriel Hernandez**
- **Issac Hinojosa**
- **Christina Mares**
- **James Massey**
- **Willie Ng**
- **Melissa Portugal**
- **Susie Salazar**
- **Veronica Guajardo**

CALLING ALL ALUMNI! Send us an update or forward to other alumni you might know. We want to hear from you! Contact avega2@stmarytx.edu