

ICMA | student chapters

2019 Best Chapter Event Submissions

Tours: Connecting Students to the Profession

On March 30, 2019, students earning their master's in public administration from the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) went on a tour of Blair, Nebraska, several of them members of the



Photo 1. CJ Heaton stands in the child development area of the Blair Public Library & Technology Center. Photographer: Clayton Keller.

student chapter of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). They were accompanied by the faculty advisor of the chapter, Dr. Robert "Bob" Blair, and the chapter mentor, Blair Assistant City Manager Phil Green. The tour, an activity hosted by the ICMA UNO Student Chapter, was originally scheduled for a weekend in February but got postponed because of bad weather.

Following a positive tour of Bellevue, Nebraska in November 2018 with then-city administrator

Joe Mangiamelli, Dr. Blair and chapter president Clayton Keller felt it would be beneficial to continue organizing tours as a way to connect students with the profession. Connecting students to communities generates more interest in the public management profession as well as helps them to see the application of concepts learned in class.

Phil Green, a UNO MPA grad himself, led the tour, which began in the Blair Public Library & Technology Center. He explained the detailed process of involving the community and private entities to build the center. Green stated that Public-private partnerships were invaluable throughout the process.

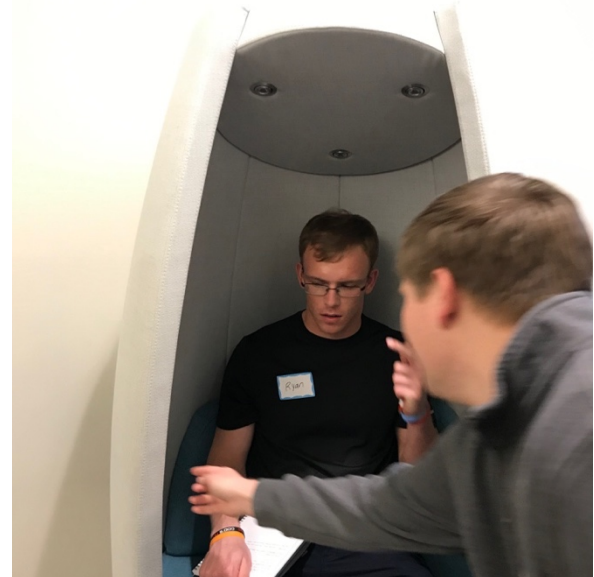


Photo 2. Ryan Christensen and Joe George check out Bluetooth pods in the Blair Public Library & Technology Center. Photographer: Clayton Keller.



Photo 3. Pictured from left to right: Joe George, Cole Bockelmann, Nick Walsh, Phil Green, Bob Blair, CJ Heaton, Ryan Christensen, Yeonkyung Kim. Photographer: Clayton Keller.

made the Blair tour particularly successful.

The tours have drawn higher participation than any other event, and thus are likely to become a mainstay for the UNO Student Chapter.

Next were visits to the former Dana College – a project site for another public-private partnership – and the Blair Water Treatment Plant where students were shown how a flood in 2011 affected preparations for the flood of 2019.

The theme of this tour reverberated the theme of the tour of Bellevue: public-private partnerships. Cities, especially small ones, have found themselves scrambling to keep up with the evolving culture of technology and amenities. Often, their hands are tied in terms of what they can do or how they can raise money. Therefore, they have found that the only way to keep pace is to tie themselves to private individuals or organizations who can then pull them along.

The ICMA UNO Student Chapter was organized to promote public management to students and then connect them to professionals in the field. Events have been held every semester since its inception to accomplish that, though these tours are new this school year. The high turnout

View the University of Delaware's Best Chapter Event submission [here](#).



Behind the Scenes with the Town of Exeter, NH

Working with local government professionals and immersing the student body in local government initiatives has been a primary focus of the UNH ICMA student group this past year. Building upon the successes of last year's inaugural ICMA student led group, this year's chapter continued on a similar path and established a mentoring program with public officials, set up shadowing opportunities with local city and town managers and launched our pinnacle event, the Behind the Scenes with Exeter, NH town government. This event was welcomed by Town Manager Russ Dean and afforded students an engaging and in depth look



at the dynamics that play out behind the scenes in municipal government management. Students participated in a round table discussion with department heads, learned the nuances of their roles, the ins and outs of the budgeting process and visited various facilities and on going projects throughout the bustling community.

This included tours of the new waste water facility plant, the Exeter river dam removal site, the tax increment finance (TIF) district and the beautiful thriving downtown. Students from the Public Administration, Public Policy and Community Development Policy and Practice program all participated.

Founded 1866 **TOWN OF EXETER, NH**
WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2019

University of Connecticut – GAPPS-ICMA Keney Park Sustainability Day

The University of Connecticut (UConn) Graduate Association of Public Policy Students – International City/County Management Association (GAPPS-ICMA) began volunteering with Keney Park during the 2018-2019 academic year. Keney Park is one of New England’s largest parks, and promotes sustainability initiatives in the areas of landscaping, composting,

aquaponics, forest management, building and design, and health and nutrition. GAPPS-ICMA began working in this ecologically rich environment this past November when they partnered with the Keney Park Sustainability Project. On November 7, students from across the Department of Public Policy (DPP) community visited the urban agricultural center. At



the center, members of the community were educated on urban gardening, wildlife preservation, native plant species, and aquaponics systems.

2018-2019 Co-President Yahaira Escribano spear headed this opportunity as a way to give back to the local community. Escribano, a lifelong resident of Hartford, has been investing in Hartford from a young age. She knew Keney Park offered multiple initiatives that allowed students the opportunity to engage with the community in areas where they were already invested and involved. Keney Park not only offered an opportunity to see first-hand the impact of sustainable practices, but also an opportunity to build a partnership where students could provide administrative and policy support.

While at the center students helped to organize a greenhouse for winter. This included replanting and trimming fresh Swiss chard, and preparing temperature control blankets to preserve vegetables. The students also learned about Keney Park’s aquaponics system. Currently the park houses one aquaponics system that is used to grow fish and vegetables in a symbiotic environment. While at the center, students also learned about additional volunteer efforts to engage the Hartford community in environmental projects.

Emily Garfinkel, Master of Public Policy 2019 and GAPPS-ICMA 2017-2018 Secretary, noted “It was a great experience to learn all about urban community partnerships, including Knox, a nonprofit organization fostering local community gardens.”



The DPP is located at UConn's Hartford campus, and this opportunity allowed students to directly engage with the community where they take classes. GAPPS-ICMA members were able to not only develop a partnership with Keney Park, but also other local organizations committed to creating a sustainable Hartford. Many DPP alums work across Hartford in both public and nonprofit agencies. By engaging with

Keney Park, the students were able to build a relationship with a community they hope to serve post-graduation.

This experience inspired students to seek other ways to help Keney Park, as noted prior, in an administrative and policy capacity. During 2019-2020 academic year, students will be assisting with grant writing, policy research, and program implementation. Though the DPP is based in Hartford, this opportunity drew undergraduate and graduate students from across the UConn community. Moving forward GAPPS-ICMA hopes to engage and promote sustainability initiatives across multiple UConn campuses.



ICMA Student Chapter Best Event Submission

Topic

The University of Colorado Denver ICMA Student Chapter hosted a career development event on March 23, 2019 on campus in the School of Public Affairs (SPA) building. The event included presentations from Joan Fishburn, SPA's new Alumni Relations and Career Services Specialist; Lisa VanRaemdonck, Executive Director of the SPA Institute; Demetrius Parker, Jefferson County Talent and Acquisition Manager; and Jeff Bello, former ICMA Student Chapter President and recent SPA graduate. Each participant provided information on different stages of the career development process for

students, including capstone and job searches, SPA career resources, and ongoing development for mid-career and tenured employees.



From Left to Right: William Swann, Traci McLean, Joan Fishburn, Lisa VanRaemdonck, Demitrius Parker, Jeff Bello, Gary Sears, and Randy Harrison.

Involvement

Our marketing strategy ensured the event was open to a very diverse group of students both in-person and via zoom. ICMA Chapter members were sent

several e-mail communications with information on participants, overall structure, and how to attend. The event was also promoted through the University of Colorado Denver Office of Diversity and Inclusion's newsletter, so undergraduate students were invited to attend as well. The entire meeting was recorded via zoom so that students that were not able to attend could still have access the information.

Impact

The event was very successful and informative. The presentations were followed by a Q&A session, where an honest, organic conversation followed. It taught attendees that it is necessary to set oneself apart by being professional and genuine, and stressed the importance of innovation and sustained growth throughout the many stages of one's career. The presentations illuminated the many dimensions of personal development so that students can connect with the appropriate resources at each stage.

This event was important for the chapter because it prepared attendees to be successful when seeking out opportunities in local government and the public sector. It accomplished this by teaching attendees how to apply the knowledge they've accumulated throughout their programs in a practical way. It also provided a platform for successful local government and public sector employees to share their best practices with students.

“IGNITE 5-2-0”



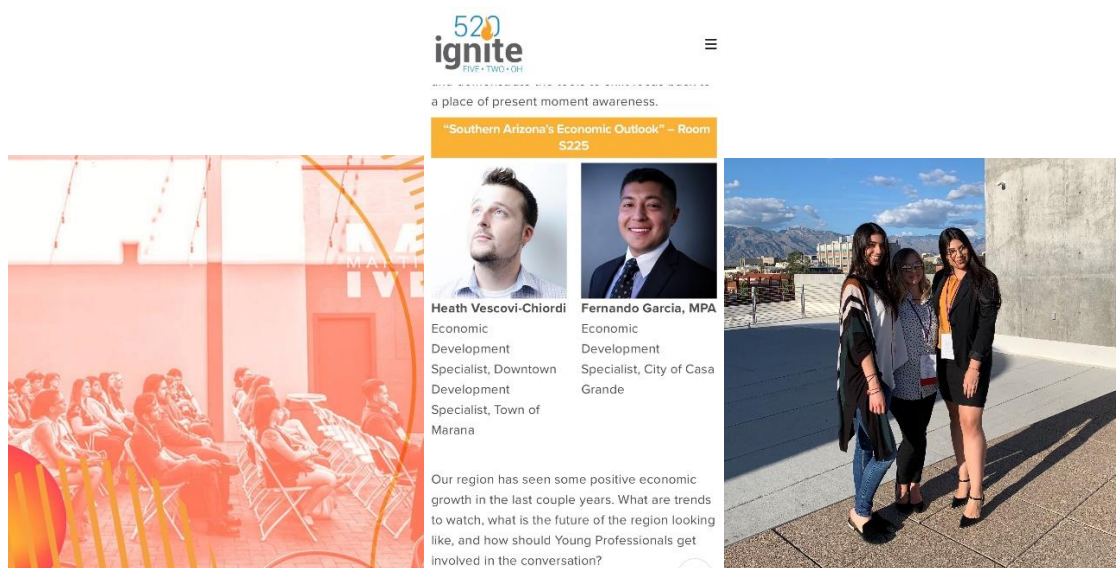
In April of 2019, the University of Arizona ICMA (UAICMA) Chapter was proud to co-host a phenomenal event called Ignite 520 for the first time ever. In the past, our University chapter had chosen to organize its own conference style event in an attempt to facilitate a greater connection with local government, professional management, and non-profit professionals. Due to the amount of competition in this region as it pertains to conferences, our chapter decided to pivot, and cohost an event with a local non-profit young professional group called Tucson Young Professionals, as well as with the University of Arizona.

The point of this conference was to attract and connect young professionals, as well as experts in the fields of local government, professional management, and non-profits, in an effort to bridge a generational gap in the workplace as well as to inform and educate professionals (both young and “old”) on the state of the local business and regional local government climate.

ICMA | student chapter University of Arizona

2018-2019 UA ICMA Chapter Event

The event featured 30 speakers over 30 sessions, all of whom were experts in their various fields in the greater Tucson region. These fields varied greatly, to ensure local professionals received a full range of information that painted a vibrant picture of their local economy, business community, Economic Development position, non-profit landscape, and local governance.



Local government leaders acted as presenters and speakers to educate attendees on various parts of local governance, including Economic Development, Public Management, Community Development and how local governments work with one another, as well as with the non-profit and private sectors. This allowed attendees to see the full range of local governance in action from both the perspective of young professionals in local governance, as well as the more seasoned veterans.

UAICMA Interim President Heath Vescovi, as well as Communications Chair Melissa Mata took the helm of organizing the event from UAICMA, along with help from Mackenzie Letcher and Ruby Najera. It was an important event to organize, as it was the beginning of forging a key and long-lasting partnership with Tucson Young

ICMA | student chapter
University of Arizona

2018-2019 UA ICMA Chapter Event

Professionals, which will help act as a conduit to help students that are interested in local governance make key connections for networking and job placement. It also allowed UAICMA to work directly with the University of Arizona in organizing and hosting the event, which greatly strengthened an already thriving and solid partnership.

In summary, the event was a complete success. In addition to the forging of a new partnership, and strengthening an already existing one, it allowed our Chapter to reach many new potential members and recruit them. We expect several new members to join our Chapter this year as a result of this event, and to have some of those new faces be part of our governing Board and Alumni Board.

We secured new donors in the process as well, ensuring that UAICMA has strong and consistent funding in order to send our members to conferences and other events to strengthen their understanding of local governance and public management. UAICMA will also now have a seat on the Board of Tucson Young Professionals to ensure open and consistent dialogue between our two great organizations for many future collaborations.

UAICMA and Tucson Young Professionals will organize the event once again this coming year. It will again act as a conduit for local young professionals to connect to local governance and public management professionals, as well as continue to be a way for them to keep their finger on the pulse of the local and regional community.

Thank you,

Heath S. Vescovi-Chiordi

Interim President, UAICMA Chapter

ICMA Student Chapter

Oakland University

312 Meadow Brook Road
Rochester, MI 48309
icma.oaklandu@gmail.com

21 June 2019



As an attempt to promote interest in the local government profession at our university, the student chapter decided to host an event with prominent local government leaders from surrounding communities to show not only MPA students but various other majors the different opportunities in the profession. So, on February 26, 2019, the chapter organized a panel discussion between four local government professionals. Various sectors of local government were represented on the panel. All four individuals provided great insight establishing a pathway to local government career success. Over 20 students attended the panel discussion, and this resulted in 5 new members joining the chapter. Another positive result of the panel discussion was the networking between local government professionals and students. Several students gained internship opportunities as a result of attending. The panelists were

- Dr. Sheryl Mitchell, City Administrator, City of Lathrup
- Village Nicholas Banda, Deputy City Manager/Economic & Community Development Director, City of Rochester
- Victor Cardenas, Assistant City Manager, City of Novi
- Joseph Gacioch, Chief Innovation Officer, Assistant City Manager, City of Ferndale.

ICMA Student Chapter

Oakland University

—
312 Meadow Brook Road
Rochester, MI 48309
icma.oaklandu@gmail.com



The panel was very insightful and everyone who attended gained interest in local government. Students had the opportunity to ask questions about each of the panelists' journeys to becoming a local government professional. They offered some advice when applying to our first jobs in local government. Victor Cardenas offered more insight about ICMA since he is involved in some committees within the organization and interview tips when applying for your first job. Nik Banda brought over 28 years of experience to the table and talked about his time as Planning Director for the City of Southfield and his time at the City of Rochester. Nik had a lot of interesting things to say. One take away he told us is that “always have an office filled with interesting things, that way you always have a conversation starter if a citizen walks into your office”. Dr. Sheryl Mitchell was the only woman on the panel and told us her story of how she was a staffer for the Detroit City Council for 13 years and then a senior analyst for the Oakland County Board of Commissioners. She informed us how she felt she needed to get her doctorate degree just to get recognized as a successful candidate for any job she might apply for. She passionately encouraged the women in the audience to pursue their dreams in local government and offered to mentor any of the women in the audience. Finally, Joseph Gacioch informed us what a Chief Innovation Officer is. Mr. Gacioch explained to us how he assisted transforming the City of Ferndale from a struggling city to a booming city. Ferndale is now the place to be in Metro Detroit with all the new bars, restaurants and businesses that

want to do business within the city limits, This was possible due to Mr.Gacioch and his teams efforts.Ferndale has attracted a lot of young people to that stretch of Woodward Ave Which is impressive due to Michigan's problem of retaining young people in the state.



Overall, we believe that our event was successful and we completed the goal of attracting students outside of the MPA program to the local government profession and interest in ICMA.



ICMA VILLANOVA

MICHAEL DIBERARDINIS

MANAGING DIRECTOR, CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

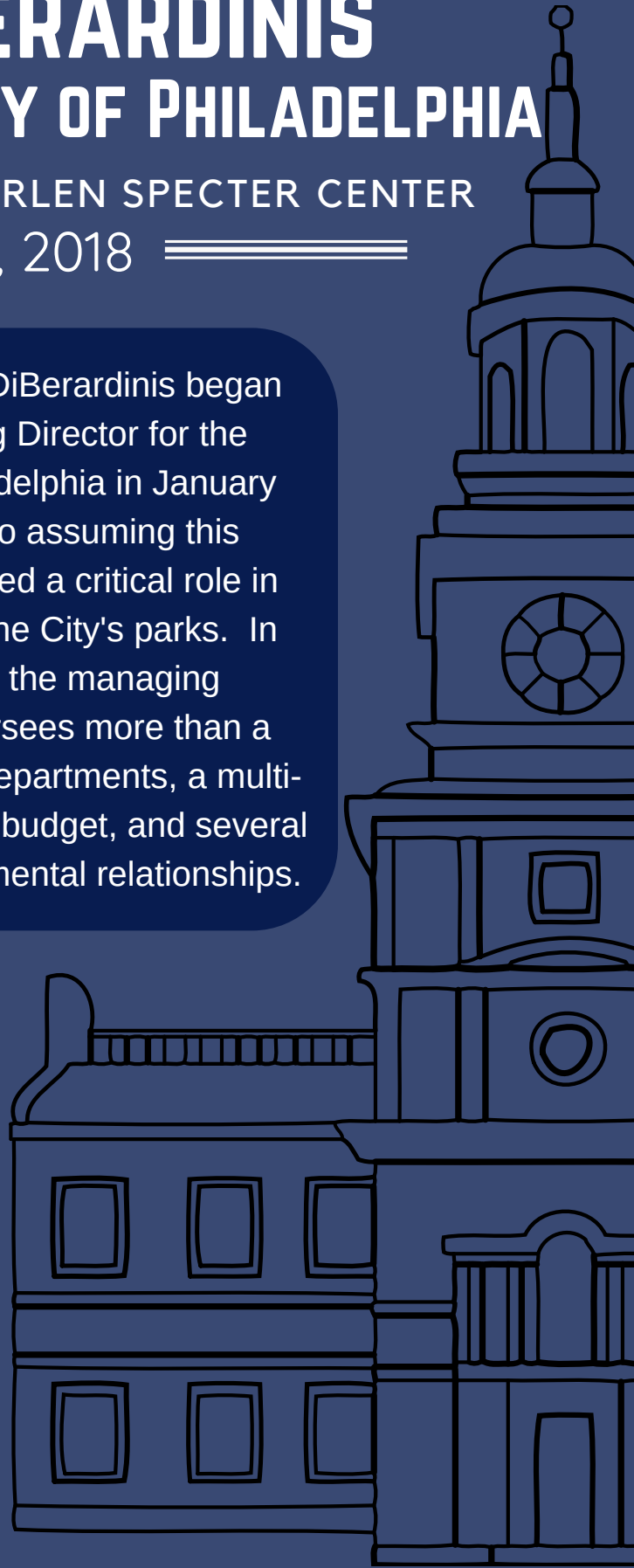
AT THE HISTORIC SENATOR ARLEN SPECTER CENTER

==== October 22, 2018 ====



Michael DiBerardinis began as Managing Director for the City of Philadelphia in January 2016. Prior to assuming this role, he played a critical role in revitalizing the City's parks. In his daily job, the managing director oversees more than a dozen city departments, a multi-billion dollar budget, and several intergovernmental relationships.

The Q & A format of this event created a space to candidly discuss what it takes to run one of largest and oldest cities in the United States. In addition to learning about a day in the life of the Managing Director, students also learned how urban politics intersect with municipal management, and how regional, state, and federal powers impact and shape his role and work within the administration.



ABOUT THE EVENT

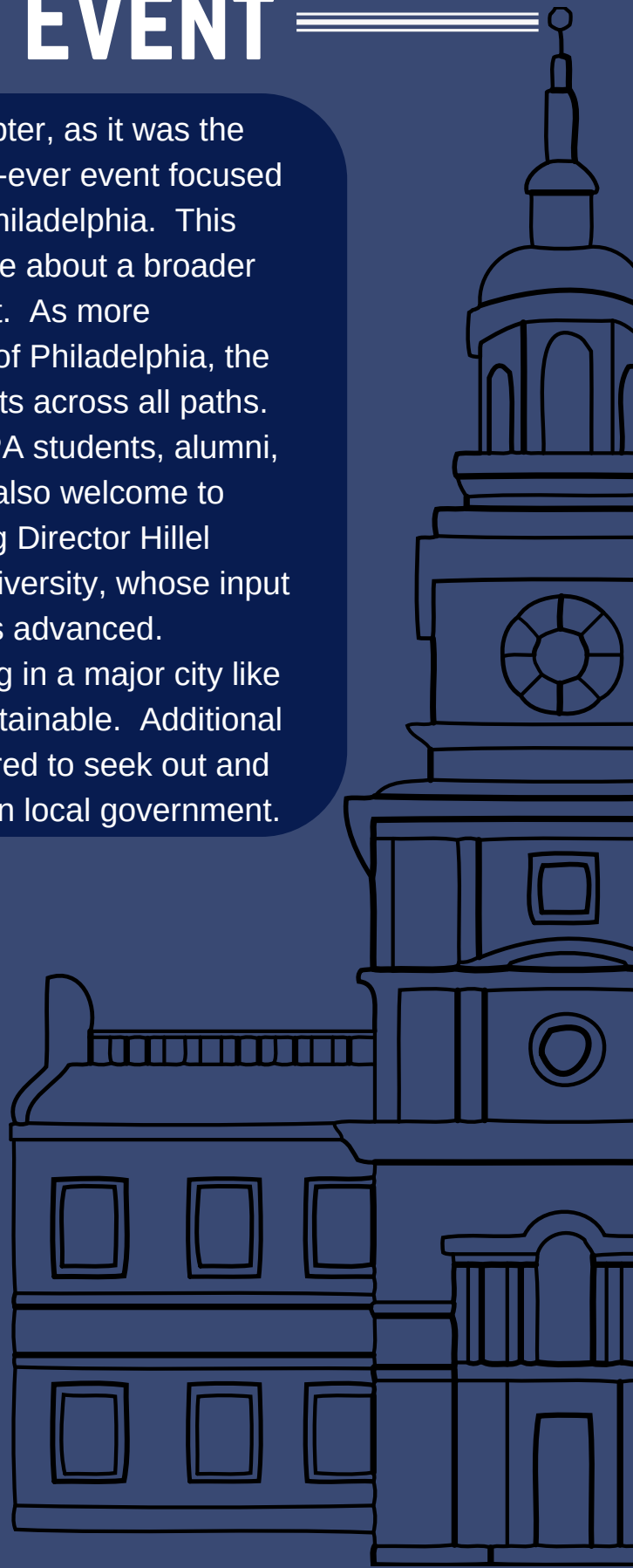
This event marked a key moment for the chapter, as it was the first-ever keynote event off-campus, and the first-ever event focused on Villanova's metropolitan anchor, the City of Philadelphia. This event gave students the opportunity to learn more about a broader variety of career paths in municipal management. As more Villanovans aspire to have careers with the City of Philadelphia, the Chapter has expanded its scope to equip students across all paths.

The event welcomed two dozen Villanova MPA students, alumni, and faculty. Jefferson University students were also welcome to attend. Also in attendance was former Managing Director Hillel Levinson, now a faculty member of Jefferson University, whose input shed light on how far the City at Philadelphia has advanced.

Students shared a new excitement for working in a major city like Philadelphia, a critical role they now believe is attainable. Additional survey results showed students felt better prepared to seek out and assume the role of a chief administrative officer in local government.

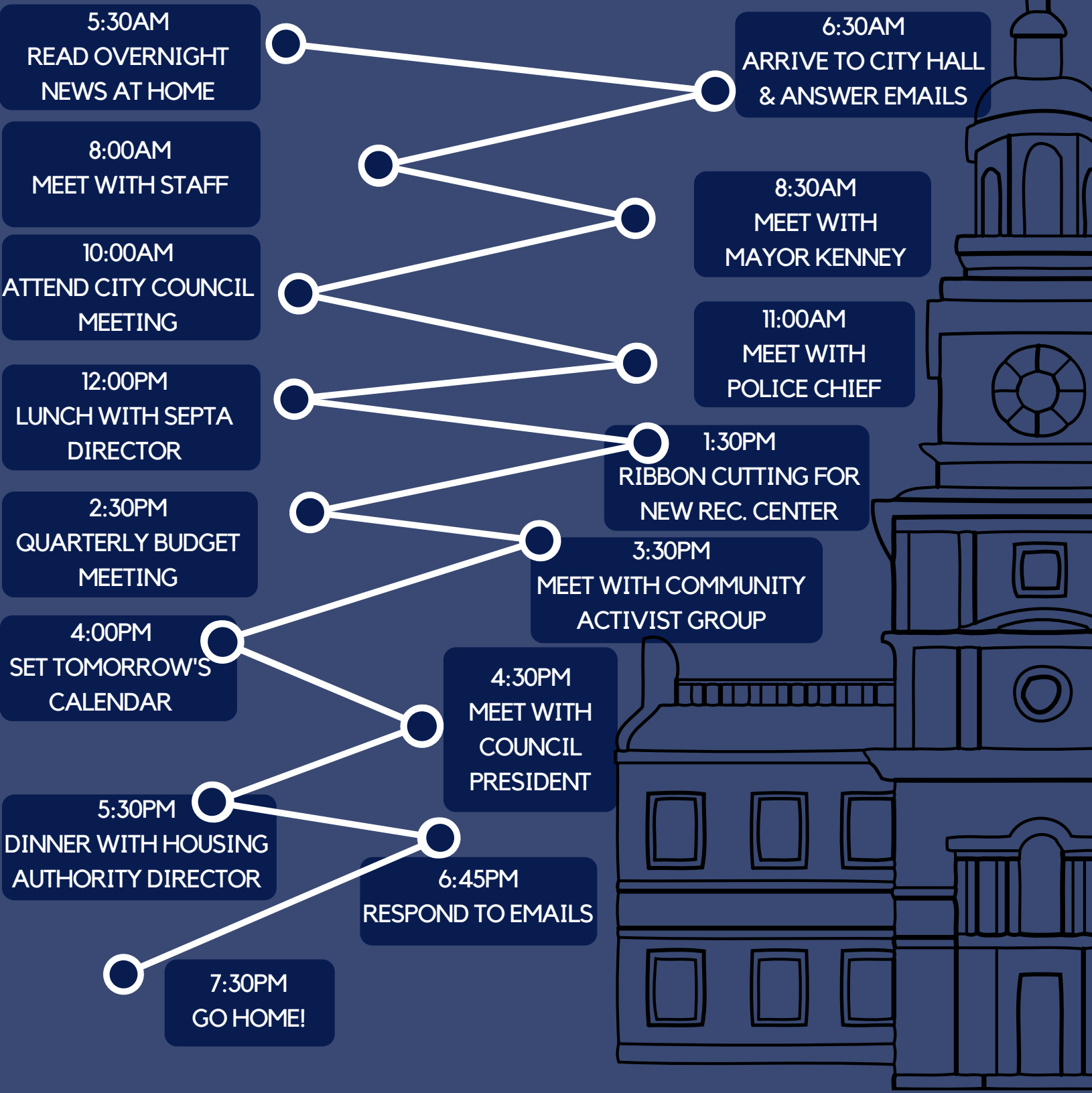


ICMA Villanova Chapter President Nick Valla introduces City of Philadelphia Managing Director Michael DiBerardinis at the Arlen Specter Center on October 22, 2018.



A DAY IN THE LIFE

OF THE PHILADELPHIA MANAGING DIRECTOR



ABOUT THE VENUE



Named for the late Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, the Arlen Specter Center for Public Service is located in the East Falls neighborhood of Philadelphia on the campus of Jefferson University.

The estate was named in Senator Specter's honor in 2014 soon after his passing. Parts of the home date back to the 1790s. Since its dedication, the building has been restored to accommodate small events, trainings, and forums. The space is focused on developing leaders to pursue careers in public service, or to inspire others to be more civically engaged. The space is adorned with countless artifacts from Senator Specter's 30-year Senate career, as well as others from his time as the City of Philadelphia District Attorney. Some of the most cherished pieces on display at the Center are his desk from the Senate Floor and documents from the impeachment proceedings of President Clinton.



Walking Tour and Lake Cruise: Hitting the Streets (and Water) in Muskegon, MI

Walking Tour

For the first event of the 2018-2019 academic year, we hit the road to Muskegon, Michigan to learn about the fast-paced development that the city is undergoing. We met downtown at the L.C. Walker Arena to begin our walking tour, led by City Manager, Frank Peterson. We learned of the innovative public-private partnership driving the renovation of the city-owned arena, including the addition of restaurant and conference space, and colorful street art on the facade.



ICMA Student Group: L.C. Walker Arena, Muskegon (Sept. 15, 2018)



Walking Tour led by City Manager, Frank Peterson (Sept. 15, 2018)

Our walking tour continued up Western Avenue, a hub of recent and ongoing development meant to bring people back to the downtown. We discussed many examples of both public and private investments, including incubator [pop-up shops and kitchens in the Western Market](#), creative public spaces for sand volleyball courts and outdoor fire places, and numerous mixed-use buildings going up in the area. This was a great opportunity for the group to ask questions about re-development efforts and learn about the processes and challenges firsthand.

Muskegon Lake/Lake Michigan Sunset Cruise

Following the walking tour, the group had the unique opportunity to climb aboard the Aquastar Cruise Line for a beautiful sunset cruise along the shores of Muskegon Lake and Lake Michigan. This provided yet another up-close perspective on the new development along the lakeshore, including plans for a mixed-use retail/residential site on land where an old paper mill had been located. With this, the largest natural deep-water port in the region, Muskegon plans to reclaim its place as a shipping hub and point-of destination in Great Lakes tourism.

Being on the water allowed us to experience this incredible natural resource in a very personal way. Our group members noted it as a real highlight of the event. For many, it was the first time they had done anything like this. It was the perfect blend of fun and learning!



Sunset, Lake Michigan (Sept. 15, 2018)



Muskegon Lake/Lake Michigan Cruise (Sept. 15, 2018)