

ICMA | student chapters

2019-2020 Best Chapter Event Winners



BEST CHAPTER EVENT

**ICMA** student
chapter
Arizona State University



ASU-UA ICMA JOINT GATHERING

ASU-ICMA hosted our first ever statewide gathering of ICMA chapters. We learned directly from government professionals about their experiences working in local government, and what to expect once entering the field. Through our event, students were able to network with professionals, learn about resume building, take a tour of Casa Grande, and hear from various early career professionals from all over our state. Participants included members of the Arizona State University and University of Arizona ICMA student chapters.

We encouraged students to consider entering the field offering first hand advice from professionals working in local government. Members gained skills and insights on how to enter the local government profession through training, technical assistance, on-the-ground learning, and networking. We had professionals who worked for Maricopa County, City of Casa Grande, City of Tucson, City of Mesa, Town of Marana, and City of Apache Junction.

It is important to prepare our members for a future in local government through networking and professional development, in order that they may succeed. Partnering with other chapters across the state is vital because upon graduation we then share a joint calling as local government leaders across the state of Arizona, whether an ASU or UA graduate, we will spend our careers as colleagues who are striving for the same goals and driven by the same motivation. Now is the time to grow our peer network that will help us through the rest of our careers.

In these unprecedented times, members who attended this event will have an advantage in a tight job market in three ways:

- Improved tactical skills in identifying, applying, and interviewing for local government jobs;
- Increased connections to current and future leaders in local government across the state of Arizona thanks to the small-group and one-on-one networking opportunities;
- and A better personal mission statement detailing why they want to join local government

Members from ASU-ICMA and UA-ICMA were able to attend the event free of cost thanks to financial support from the statewide Arizona City/County Management Association and in-kind support from the host city, City of Casa Grande. We also had one dozen speakers and presenters from various local governments across the state attend our event. The event reached students from the UofA and ASU, as well as various local government professionals. In total 26 student members from ASU and UA were joined by 14 current local government leaders for a day of insights on how to enter the local government profession.

The ASU-UA-ICMA joint gathering in Casa Grande was successful not just because over 3 dozens participants were able to gain valuable advice, share their stories, and connect with one another but it was also successful because it showed that the future local government leaders in Arizona are driven, generous, and care about working together across local boundaries.



REALITIES VS EXPECTATIONS

February 21, 2020
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Community Recreation Center, Casa Grande

Opening 9:00 am	Welcome!	<i>Amanda Bruno, UA Thomas Prior, ASU Larry Rains, Casa Grande</i>
Session 1 9:15 am	The possibilities of a career in local government. A demonstration of the range of careers available. Participants will discuss their: 1. Career arc 2. Job responsibilities 3. The meaning they get from their work	<i>Heath Vescovi-Chiordi, Marana Camilla Martins-Bekat, Tucson Electric Power Fernando Garcia, Casa Grande</i>
Session 2 10:10 am	Successful job search autopsies Recent hires break down what they did right and what they could have improved on in a successful job search.	<i>Marshall Pimentel, Avondale Steven Turner, Chandler Sarah Meggison, Tucson</i>
Session 3 11:10 am	I got the job! Now what? How to lay a solid foundation for leadership as a young professional. Young professionals discuss 90-day plans, what they wish they had known earlier, and share mistakes they made as they started a job	<i>Dominic DeCono, Mesa Megan Lynn, Scottsdale Chris Cornelison, Oro Valley</i>
Lunch Session 12:15 pm	Challenges to expect coming into this profession. The realities vs. expectations of a career in local government management.	<i>Tim Gomez, Tempe Blaise Caudill, Mesa</i>
Casa Grande Experiences 1 1:00 pm	<i>Concurrent Sessions:</i> Casa Grande economic development tour Economic Development- Industrial Corridor <u>OR</u> Resume review workshop with ASU/HR professionals	<i>Fernando Garcia, Casa Grande</i>
Casa Grande Experiences 2 2:30 pm	<i>Concurrent Sessions:</i> Casa Grande local government management tour Neon Sign Park (Downtown) neonsignpark.com/ <u>OR</u> Interview workshop with ASU/HR professionals	<i>Fernando Garcia, Casa Grande</i>
Closing plenary 3:30 pm	Closing: A time to hear from City Management Professionals. The challenges to expect in this profession and the meaning to be found in rising to those challenges.	<i>Bryant Powell, Apache Junction</i>
Networking event 4:00 pm	A happy hour for networking, informal discussions, and processing the day.	<i>A Latte Vino 958 E Rodeo Rd Casa Grande, AZ 85122</i>



Best Chapter Event Submission: Breaking into Local Government Panel

On October 30, 2019, ICMA@USC hosted a panel of USC alumni and friends in local government form around Los Angeles County to provide their insights on a career in local government. Students were lucky to hear from panelist in different parts of city government in different stages of their career, including 2018-2019 ICMA@USC Co-Manager Allison Wilhite, who is serving as the Venice Bridge Home Deputy with Council District 11 in Los Angeles! The other panelists were Carla Williams who serves as HR Manager for the City of La Cañada Flintridge, Gregory Kajszo with the Department of Innovation, Performance & Audit at the City of Glendale, and Joe Guerrero who serves as a Budget Analyst for the City of Long Beach. The panel was moderated by ICMA@USC's own Co-Manager Amy Chong, with a wide-ranging question and answer session afterwards.



ICMA@USC partnered with the USC Price Office of Career Services to sponsor the event. This allowed us to work together to reach out to alumni who could present students with information on the wide range of possible career paths in local government, as well as about the different stages of careers in local government. The goal of the event was to provide students with additional information on possible careers in local government, and how best to use our time in graduate school to position ourselves for success.

Panelist shared their strategies for starting a career in local government and ways to help



an application to stand out in this competitive field. It was critical advice for students, particularly graduating students, as the panelists stressed the necessity of starting to apply for local government jobs early to be in a good position to start full time work after graduation. Los Angeles County is home to many different cities, and they vary in their hiring processes, so hearing from panelists from different cities was enlightening!

The panel spoke to a packed room at the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy, many of whom asked questions of the panel. The event was a success, as the panelists and many students stayed after the panel was officially over to continue to network and discuss career opportunities in local government. Representatives from the ICMA@USC board and the USC Price Office of Career Services were in attendance, in addition to other graduate students at the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy. The professional advisor for ICMA@USC, Mark Alexander who serves as City Manager of La Cañada Flintridge, was also in attendance.

The photo below shows the four panelists with ICMA@USC Board Members, as well ICMA@USC Professional Advisor Mark Alexander and Dominic Alletto from the USC Price Office of Career Services, who also serves as an advisor to ICMA@USC.



ICMA@USC can be reached at icma.usc@gmail.com.

ICMA | student chapter
Texas A&M University

Rural and Fantastic Governance: An Afternoon in Todd Mission, Texas

05 MAY 2020

Texas A&M Bush School of Government and
Public Service
Allen Building TAMU 4220 1004, George Bush Dr
W, College Station, TX 77845



In November of 2019, the Texas A&M ICMA Student Chapter visited city manager Neal Wendele in Todd Mission, Texas to learn about rural governance in Texas and Todd Mission's unique relationship to the Texas Renaissance Festival. Neal, a former Bush School and Texas A&M graduate, gave the student chapter a tour of city hall and the volunteer fire station, held a conversation with the students about his journey from graduate student to city manager, and answered the questions students had about local government job searches. At the end of the day, Neal gave the students tickets to tour and enjoy the renaissance festival for themselves.



Little City, Big Challenges

One of the big topics during our discussions centered on what sets Neal's job in a rural area apart from the larger cities we typically learn about in our management classes. We learned that working for a rural government comes with its challenges. On Neal's first day of work in Todd Mission, he told us he realized there was not enough money in the city budget to pay the salary that was in his contract. His first task became finding funds to pay himself. Rural governments, we learned, sometimes struggle with having the resources to pay for

large expenses, like his salary and a new fire truck. As Todd Mission's city manager, Neal tracked down both missing revenue that was supposed to be coming into the city and found missing roads within the area that had been lost over time. Here, the students learned about the problem-solving nature needed to overcome these challenges for rural cities.

A Fantastic Attraction

Neal also told us about how Todd Mission is a city with a fantastic tourist attraction. We learned about the incredible history of Todd Mission and how it coincides with the

history of the renaissance festival. Todd Mission was incorporated as a city after the owners of the renaissance festival sought to have more control over the large area. Their city council, at the time we visited, was made up primarily of locals who owned and managed Renaissance Festival shops or attractions. The previous city administrator before Neal worked for both the renaissance festival and the city government. The council decided to hire a full-time, professional city manager as plans for large developments within the area were created that would bring about 11,000 new residents to the area. Here, students from the chapter learned about how cities develop and some of the legality behind that development.



Growing as Young Professionals

Neal is also a recent graduate from Texas A&M's MPA program and had a lot of great insight into getting started in the profession. Students were curious about job searches, what positions they should be looking for, coursework that would be advantageous to the profession, and which strategies would be most successful once we get our foot in the door. Two key pieces of advice stood out. Neal mentioned that many of the successes he had in Todd Mission came from information he got from attending TCMA events, workshops, and training on subjects he had limited knowledge of. Also, Neal mentioned his previous internship with Navasota, TX city manager Brad Stafford and

how having a good mentor gave him a good place to go for advice. Overall, Neal's advice seemed to get at the idea of having a strong network of professionals to ask questions to and learn from.



Ultimately, we are incredibly grateful to Neal and our other wonderful city managers, mentors, and leaders in this profession that invest time into helping build the next generation of public servants. We found it incredibly fascinating to observe the day to day operation in a small town and see the charm and importance of rural America in our society. It helped us all gain perspective on problem solving, leadership, and professionalism as young people!

“Public Service is a Noble Calling”

- George H.W. Bush

The “**UD ICMA Student Chapter - 2020 Best Chapter Event**” Adobe Spark page may be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/2020UDICMAbestevent>.