



*Dr. Peter Haruna, Professor of Public Administration/  
Political Science and MPA Program Director.*

## **A Word From The MPA Director**

Our MPA program has been around since 1999. We have grown and expanded since then in terms of faculty strength, enrollment, and graduation. We have trained and graduated 134 public service professionals most of whom work for governments and non-profit organizations in the border region. We have earned national accreditation and we have been recognized and ranked as the most affordable online MPA program. To that extent, we are steadily fulfilling the mission for which we were established. On behalf of MPA faculty, I will like to thank everyone who has supported our MPA program, especially our key stakeholders: TAMIU administrators, MPA graduates, MPA employers, students, and well-wishers.

## **What The MPA Degree Can Do For You**

The MPA is a versatile and flexible degree that offers graduates a wide range of career-building opportunities in public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Students acquire managerial skills, tools, and abilities that employers find useful in career advancement.

Although MPA graduates typically work for governments, they are not confined to that sector. Nationwide, roughly 20 percent of MPA holders work in the private sector. It is a preferred degree even in specialized fields such as public health and recreation and parks.

Locally, our graduates are holding leadership and management positions as nonprofit executive directors, city planners, county tax assessors, and school principals, among others. By preparing individuals and equipping them with knowledge, skills, and abilities to succeed in their careers, we strengthen institutional capacities and ensure that public goods and services reach those who stand in most need.

For more information, please contact Dr. Peter Haruna at 956.326.2613 or [pharuna@tamiu.edu](mailto:pharuna@tamiu.edu).

## **Non-profit Leadership and Management**

In response to the growing market of over 400 nonprofits in Webb County, the MPA program offers a well-crafted set of graduate-level courses in smart nonprofit leadership and management to address their capacity-building needs. Recent research indicates that the vast majority of nonprofits in Webb County stand in need of professional training for their employees. We have a variety of courses, including, Survey of Nonprofit Leadership and Management, Nonprofit Law and Process, Grant and Contract Management, and Philanthropy and Fundraising that foster valuable professional competencies. This 12 credit-hour certificate program is especially suitable for beginning-to mid-career professionals looking to enhance their skills and tools in legal organization, drafting bylaws, grant-writing, fundraising, managing boards, to name but a few. Our experienced and dedicated faculty work to assure that students get what it takes to lead and manage nonprofit organizations.

## Spring 2016 MPA Graduates

This Spring, two hard-working students (Carolina García and Julia Orduña) successfully completed the MPA program after passing the comprehensive exams. They have demonstrated through coursework and exams and faculty have verified that they possess the requisite competence to work in positions of leadership and management. This graduation cycle brings the total number of MPA graduates to 136. We congratulate them for achieving this milestone in their distinguished careers in the public and nonprofit sectors. As emerging professionals, they will join the MPA community of practitioners and scholars and contribute to build the field and discipline of public administration. We look forward to working with them and others to promote the MPA degree through community outreach efforts and recruitment initiatives.



*Carolina García, MPA '16, is a forensic scientist at the Texas Department of Agriculture. She is convinced that the MPA program has given her the opportunity to take her passion for public service one step further. Her experience in our MPA program has exceeded all her expectations and she recommends our program to anyone who has an interest in working for local, state, and/or federal government.*

## MPA Current Student Profile

In our routine admission interviews, roughly 70 percent of applicants explain that they consciously selected the MPA degree as a means of consolidating and advancing their professional careers, as well as preparing themselves for higher levels of responsibility. On this basis, we can claim our program to be a mostly beginning- to mid-career preparation program.

However, in some cases, our students have included institutional leaders, such as City Mayors and high-ranking law enforcement and public school districts supervisors seeking self-fulfillment and knowledge enhancement. As we have transitioned to online-only delivery, the MPA market has extended as far north as Dallas, as far East as Houston, and as far West as El Paso and Eagle Pass.

We are also beginning to see changes from different types of majors coming to the MPA program. We are happy to welcome this growing diversity in our program, especially as it helps us to fully address the diversity standard of our accrediting body. Our obligation is to fill in their knowledge, competence, and skill gaps to enable them to lead and manage in public governance.

Given our unique locale, we are dedicated to preparing leaders and managers that are both willing and capable of working cooperatively and collaboratively across jurisdictions and sectors.



*Marilyn Bautista, in-coming MPA student and Founder of NO MORE – Laredo, TX campaign to fight against Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault. She believes the public administration degree from TAMIU will provide her with a deep understanding of public administration needed to run programs and implement policies for the public good.*

# Internationalization of the MPA Program

Our online presence and delivery foster tremendous opportunities for international and cross-cultural collaboration with programs in other regional settings. Since 2014, we have exerted efforts to build relationships with UNITEC in Honduras and the University of Johannesburg [UJ-South Africa] in line with TAMIU's mission to "enhance academic programs to meet the needs of a changing global society." We are very pleased that a formal agreement with UJ has been signed to facilitate faculty and student exchanges between our programs. Likewise, contacts and discussions have begun to contribute to and learn from other counterpart programs in Monterrey, México and UNITEC [Honduras]. We are excited about how these collaborative arrangements will broaden and deepen student perspectives. As our accrediting body [NASPAA] extends accreditation opportunities to international programs [e.g., China and Korea], we hope to position ourselves in a manner that enriches global, international, and comparative perspectives.



*As a part of our internationalization initiative, Dr. Peter Haruna [left] met with Dr. Marlon Breve [middle], Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and Dr. José Rafael Del Cid [right] faculty of the Institute of Public Policy at the UNITEC Campus [Tegucigalpa, Honduras] to explore faculty collaboration and student exchange opportunities.*

## MPA Faculty Update

We have five full-time faculty with the relevant education, expertise, and experience in core areas of public administration such as budgeting and financial management, human resources management, research and program evaluation, administrative law and ethics, and organizational analysis, among others.

We take turns in teaching core and elective courses, focusing on applying principles and theories to the analysis and interpretation of experiences in public administration settings. To stay current in the field and discipline of public administration, faculty engage in research, present their findings at conferences, and also publish articles, book chapters, and books.

This Spring three faculty [Drs. Peter Haruna, Mehnaaz Momen, and María Reyes] will present papers on cutting edge issues at the Public Administration Theory Network Conference in San Antonio Texas [May 20-22, 2016]. We bring our research to our classes not only to enrich discussions, but also to serve as exemplars for student research and scholarship.



*Elizabeth Alonzo Villarreal (right), MPA '03, Executive Director of Neighborworks Laredo and Founder/CEO of Laredoans Against Drunk Driving (LADD).*



*Dr. María Reyes (left) regularly teaches Survey of Public Affairs and Administration [PADM 5375] and Organization Theory [PADM 5342]. She earned her MPA degree at TAMIU in 2004 and her Ph.D. at Auburn University in 2012. Her research interests focus on local government, political, and public administration theory. She is excited to mentor MPA students and help them become effective and responsible public servants. As an MPA Alumna, we are proud of her achievement and contribution to continued growth of the MPA program.*