Kikkoman establishes public affairs scholarship to honor Lucey

The Kikkoman Foods Foundation has donated $50,000 to the La Follette School of Public Affairs for student scholarships in the name of former Governor Patrick Lucey.

The donation to establish the Patrick J. Lucey Memorial Scholarship Fund was announced September 14 at a memorial service in the Wisconsin Capitol for Lucey, who died this year at age 96.

“The La Follette School thanks Kikkoman Foods for this gift which will provide a lasting legacy for our good friend, Governor Patrick J. Lucey,” says Professor Susan Webb Yackee, director of the La Follette School. “With this donation protected in perpetuity, we expect to be able to give a $3,000 scholarship each year to a deserving student to study public policy. As others contribute, we will be able to do more.”

Since Lucey recruited Kikkoman to Walworth, Wisconsin, in 1972, the company has grown into the world’s largest naturally brewed soy sauce plant.

Lucey had a long career of public service. He served one term in the Wisconsin Assembly from 1949-1951, then was lieutenant governor from 1965-1967. He was governor of Wisconsin from 1971-1977, when President Jimmy Carter appointed him ambassador to Mexico. In 1980, he ran unsuccessfully for the vice presidency with independent presidential candidate John Anderson.

High research rankings showcase degrees’ value

The international attention La Follette School faculty is receiving for the high quality of their research is good news for all of our alumni and our current students. Two new rankings affirm that the La Follette School provides cutting-edge public affairs training that prepares our students to serve in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. The work our alumni do around the world as city budget analysts, state program evaluators, federal management officers and international consultants is further proof of the quality of our academic program.

Two recent international studies have given the University of Wisconsin–Madison high marks for the quality of its faculty research in public administration.

The first, published in the Journal of Public Affairs Education, ranks the university fourth in the world for public administration research. When the overall index is broken down, we rank third for quality, fourth for impact and sixth for productivity.

A second study ranks us second for the quality of our master’s program.

Skills help clients, prompt donations

As a broker between a client and a tax authority, 1977 alum Jon Skavlem draws on his master’s degree in public administration as he ensures businesses know they are paying their fair share of taxes.

“My knowledge of public policy and how legislative intent works helps me represent my client without sacrificing fairness,” says Skavlem, director of local and state taxes for Baker Tilly Virchow Krause LLP, the 12th largest U.S. public accounting firm.

The critical thinking and communication skills Skavlem learned at the Center for the Study of Public Policy and Administration have stood him in good stead.

“That critical thinking, that sifting through concepts and information and synthesizing, meant I graduated with good reading and research skills applicable to the tax consulting area,” Skavlem says. “Writing an opinion letter, communicating to auditors, clients or others, or synthesizing financial data and presenting it—my ability to use a blended liberal arts and public policy writing style and way of thinking, a lot of that came out of my early graduate days with the public policy center.”

Because of those skills he gained and
Moynihan honored with national award

Professor Donald Moynihan has been recognized with a prestigious award for his research, the David N. Kershaw Award from the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management.

The $10,000 Kershaw award honors a scholar younger than 40 who has made a distinguished contribution to public policy analysis and management. The award is made once every two years and is determined by the president of Mathematica Policy Research, the president of APPAM, and the dean of the Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.

“The La Follette School is extremely fortunate to have world-class faculty who care about providing excellent classroom teaching, as well as path-breaking research,” says school Director Susan Yackee. “Don Moynihan exemplifies this tradition.”

Skavlem continued from page 1

because he received a fellowship that covered many of his graduate school expenses, Skavlem contributes financially to the La Follette School via the University of Wisconsin Foundation. “I received a fellowship when I was at a crossroads in my undergraduate career,” Skavlem says. “I was thinking about law school, so I sought out a professor for advice, and he directed me to the Center for the Study of Public Policy and Administration.”

Skavlem also gives to the school because he believes skilled people need to work in the public sector. “I feel that if they could, everyone should have some exposure to the public sector to understand how it works,” he says.

“If my contributions help keep the public affairs program going and support good bright people as they move into government jobs, we need that.”

Jon Skavlem

After eight years with DOR, Skavlem joined the Arthur Andersen accounting firm, then Price Waterhouse when the firm asked if he would be interested in opening up a Milwaukee-based state and local consulting practice. Six and a half years later, he joined Virchow Krause, a regional accounting firm based in Madison. As the firm grew, it added the Baker Tilly International brand name to extend the regional firm’s national and international reach. Baker Tilly International is now the world’s eighth largest network of accounting firms, with 125 member firms that operate in 110 countries.

“We assist our clients as they manage and plan for their taxes and related issues at the state and local level,” Skavlem says. “As more companies project themselves across multiple states, their taxes, especially their business income taxes, become more complex.”

With this increasing complexity, many businesses do not have a good handle on how to manage their taxes or comply with the filing requirements. “Our role is to help them resolve tax issues,” Skavlem says. “We are here to help them find out the right tax. When we represent a client, we work with the tax agency to work out what is fair and apply the tax law in the right way. If the client made a mistake, we are willing to concede the client should pay the tax. On the other hand, the client should not be penalized by complex laws or a rule or regulation that should not have been interpreted a certain way.”

In all his interactions with clients and tax experts he meets at international conferences, Skavlem says, he applies his public policy training to be a voice of clarity in the complex tax world. “In the day-to-day world with hard and fast tax issues, I have not forgotten what I learned about tax policy analysis and what makes good policy,” Skavlem says. “Taxes are more than numbers stuck in a form.”
Fletcher named editor, receives $92,730 grant

La Follette School professor Jason M. Fletcher has been named managing editor of the Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, the leading journal in the field of public policy and public management.

In addition, Fletcher has received a $92,730 grant from the Russell Sage Foundation to analyze three school-based longitudinal datasets from the past three decades to assess educational mobility.

“I will focus on the intergenerational transmission of socioeconomic status and how these effects vary over time and across states,” Fletcher says. “Rising levels of economic inequality since the early 1970s raise many questions about the intergenerational transmission of advantage and the effects of rising inequality on social mobility.”

In other research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Fletcher found that partners in a spousal relationship share a greater degree of genetic similarity than do randomly selected, non-coupled pairs of individuals. “The results suggest that couples may seek mates who share a similar level of education and are more genetically similar to themselves than individuals selected randomly,” Fletcher says.

2011 alum has second daughter

Santosh Lamichhane, 2011, reports the birth of his second daughter, Arya, in September. “She was 6 pounds, 8 ounces, and 19 inches tall at birth,” says Lamichhane, who is a senior analyst at DNV GL in Madison. “Both mom and baby are doing well, and the whole family is happy!”

Bobs bike the barns

2011 alum Erika Jones organizes the annual Bike the Barns, a fall Madison-area fund-raiser for Fair-Share Community Supported Agriculture Coalition, where she is program director. Her classmate Jonny Hunter, founder of the Underground Food Collective, started the bicycle tour that features local farms and local food.

Student Services Coordinator Mary Treleven volunteered at the September event, while 2014 alumni Claire Boyce and Brett Halverson, Professor Rob Meyer, and students Sara Eskrich and Drew McDermott rode their bikes.

“This event not only raises critical funds to support sustainable agriculture, local food and farms, and increasing access to CSA (community-supported agriculture) for low income households, it brings together a wide range of supporters to increase awareness about community supported agriculture,” Jones says. “It is wonderful that the ‘Bobs’ came out to enjoy the ride and show their support!”

Speckhard leads Lutheran World Relief

1982 alum Daniel Speckhard became president and chief executive officer of Lutheran World Relief in July. After retiring as a career diplomat he became a senior advisor at Palantir Technologies and a non-resident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. Earlier, he served in high-level diplomatic roles in Republican and Democratic administrations, most recently, U.S. ambassador to Greece from 2007 to 2010.

Alum honored for developing influence

2000 alum Carole Schaeffer is one of the 25 most influential people in the greater Madison area, local web site IBMadison.com announced in July. Her role in the Madison Common Council’s decision to liberalize its tax increment financing policy won her the designation. She is executive director of Smart Growth Greater Madison and owns a consulting firm.

‘12 grad running health clinic in Belize

Alum Carly Hood is now clinic and public health director at a clinic in southern Belize. After completing degrees in public affairs and public health in 2012, Hood held a Wisconsin Population Health Service Fellowship.
Alumni discuss policy, career options with students

Students are hearing from alumni in a series of career development seminars and networking events this fall semester.

Topic have ranged from the Presidential Management Fellowship program to the Clean Power Plan to public sector consulting.

2004 alum and PMF recruiter Chad Ruppel talked about the fellowship and how students can prepare for the application process. Based in Madison, he is a program analyst with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Milwaukee office.

2014 grad Malika Taalbi talked about her fellowship with the National Nuclear Security Administration.

Environmental Protection Agency administrator Susan Hedman, a 1979 alum, traveled up from Chicago to discuss the Clean Power Plan and other proposed climate change regulations.

Four alumni spoke about their careers as part of the Professional Development Workshop: Alison Bergum, 2005, associate researcher/evidence lead with the university’s Population Health Institute; Tamarine Cornelius, 1999, research analyst with the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families; Erinn Monroe-Nye, 2005, director of market transformation for Chicago Bridge and Iron Company; and Bob Nikolay, 1989, administrator with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

In from Washington, D.C., 2008 alum Andria Hayes-Birchler was to speak with students in November about her work for the Millennium Challenge Corporation, a U.S. international aid agency.

For the La Follette School’s after-work networking series, 2006 alum Christian Morran, a budget and policy analyst with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, spoke in September. At press time, 2003 grad Lisa Ellinger, an administrator with the Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds, was to speak in November.

Others are helping with mentoring, mock interviews, speed networking and the La Follette in Chicago program.