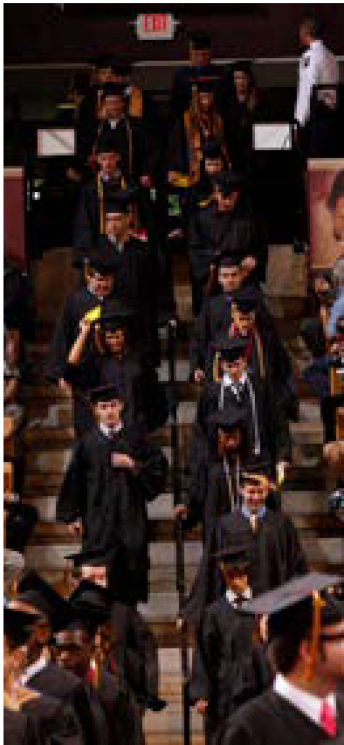
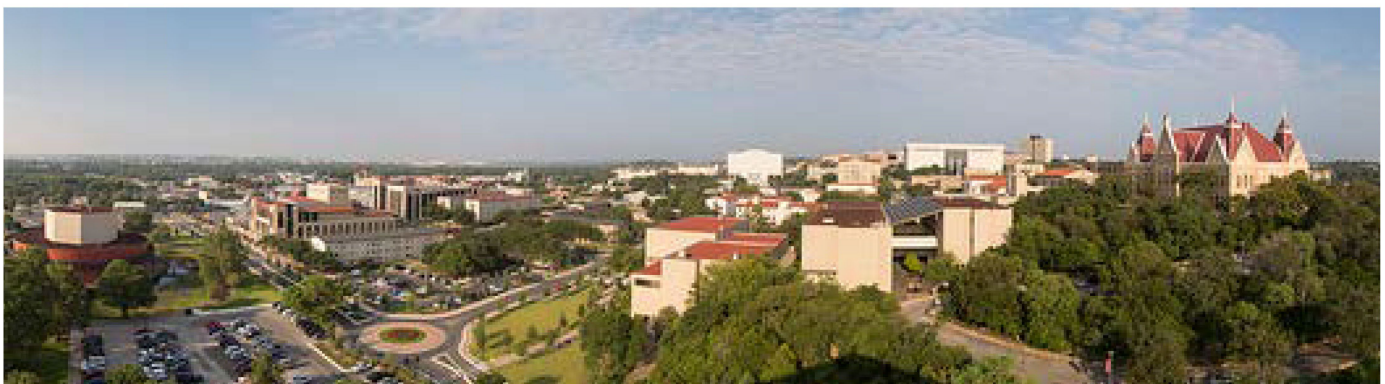


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# DIRECTOR'S CORNER

## A MESSAGE FROM DR. RANGARAJAN

Hello Everyone! I hope you enjoy this latest edition of the MPA magazine which covers several exciting events that have occurred in 2017 and celebrates the wonderful accomplishments of my colleagues, current students and alumni of the MPA program.



As most of you are probably aware, as of August 2017, I took over the directorship of the MPA program from Interim Director Dr. Patricia Shields. As I step into this role, I draw inspiration from the stability, rigor, attention to detail and unflinching commitment she showed in her almost two-decade stint as director. I have also had the opportunity to observe Dr. Thomas Longoria's energy, enthusiasm, commitment to student success and innovative approaches to revamping the MPA program during his tenure as director. I hope to give my all as well in this role which comes with immense responsibility and opportunity. In the few months that I have been director, I have specifically derived a lot of fulfillment interacting closely with potential, current and former students. I look forward to more such opportunities as I continue on this year.

The Texas State MPA program went through a rigorous reaccreditation review in the spring of 2017. The

site-visit team in charge of reaccreditation met with our students, alumni, staff and faculty in Austin and San Marcos. Thanks to the efforts of our alumnus James Quintero, we were able to host the team for interviews with alumni at the stunning Texas Public Policy Foundation in Downtown Austin.



The accreditation team was particularly impressed with the remarkably large turnout of alumni and the wonderful things our former students had to say about our faculty and program in general. The strong bond we have with our alumni and the goodwill we enjoy from them did not go unnoticed. The team also took a tour of our gorgeous campus and met with university administrators and other important entities before making a decision.

Overall they were very impressed with the strengths and rigor of our program. They made special mention of the real world implications of student research that

emerged from our program. They took note of Liz Ascot's Applied Research Project, a cost benefit analysis of Wonder World Drive as they were driven on Wonder World Drive to campus. They were appreciative of the fact that our program operated with relative ease across three locations, with limited staff support and had a cohesive set of course offerings through face-to-face, fully online and hybrid teaching modalities. Our program has been a NASPAA accredited program in central Texas for almost four decades and that tradition continues as we have been reaccredited for another seven years.

In 2018 we hope to fill two faculty lines, continue to develop our strengths in online teaching, increase our research productivity, and continue offering experiences to our students that balance research and practice. We are hopeful that this year will be very exciting in terms of teaching, research and service to the profession and community.



# PROGRAM NEWS

## Public Service Recognition Week Ceremony Honors Texas State Public Administration Students and Faculty

The 2017 Public Service Recognition Awards Banquet took place on May 17th just steps away from the state capitol at the Austin Club. Sponsored by the CenTex Chapter of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) the annual event recognizes and celebrates the people and programs of government, education, nonprofit, and advocacy sectors meeting the needs of Central Texas.

Texas State faculty, staff, and alumni gathered together with CenTex members from The LBJ School of Public Affairs and Texas A&M University. Jenifer Sarver, founder of Sarver Strategies, provided the evening's keynote address. Ms.

Sarver's distinguished career spans the corporate, nonprofit, and political worlds and she has nearly two decades of experience in media relations, crisis communications, speechwriting, coalition building, and media and presentation skills training. She spoke on Civility in Public Discourse. Sarver concluded the talk with a challenge to members: "We each have to be responsible for our words and actions -- and what we allow around us. Silence in the face of incivility emboldens, empowers and perpetuates it."

The banquet also celebrated outstanding achievements in the public sector. Among those recognized were MPA faculty member Dr. Billy

Fields, who received the award for Distinguished Public Administration Educator. Recent graduates Luke Scott and David Anderson were honored with the prestigious James W. McGrew Research Award for work done as part of their Applied Research Projects while at Texas State. Marilyn Balanoff presented seven current PA students with the Balanoff Family Scholarship. The evening concluded by inducting new student members into the Public Administration Honor Society, Pi Alpha Alpha.



# AWARDS 2017

## DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATOR

Dr. Billy Fields

*Professor, Department of Political Science*

*Texas State University*

## JAMES W. MCGREW RESEARCH AWARD RECIPIENTS

Luke Scott

“Campus Carry Policy: A Study of Perceptions of Students, Faculty,  
and Staff at Texas State University”

Dr. Nandhimi Rangarajan (Faculty Advisor)

David Anderson

“A Descriptive Analysis of Frequent Users of an Urban Emergency  
and Medical Services System”

Dr. Hassan Tajalli (Faculty Advisor)

## WILLIAM P. HOBBY INTERNSHIP FELLOWSHIP

Tyler Blakey

Dilini Wimalasuriya

**PHI ALPHA ALPHA**  
**INDUCTEES**

JacQuitta Beeks  
Tyler Blakely  
Carlos Encarnacion  
Lindsay Escalante  
Leonides Gomez Jr.  
Moaz Khan  
Jordan Macha  
Jose Olvera  
Lisa Paiz  
Sarah Pressler  
Zohaib Qadri  
Sergio Vasquez  
Julia Webber

**BALANOFF FAMILY**  
**SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

Tajudeen Basiru  
Ashley Burkett  
Todd Podbielski  
Natasha Thomas  
Abigail Trahan  
Catherine Wicker  
Ricardo Zavala

**Public Service Recognition Week**

Each year the President and Congress designate the first full week of May as Public Service Recognition Week in honor of the men and women who serve America as federal, state, county and local government employees. Public Service Recognition Week highlights the accomplishments of the dedicated public servants who work tirelessly on behalf of all Americans and who rarely get the credit they deserve. For more information about the Public Service Recognition Week visit <http://publicservicerecognitionweek.org>





# STUDENT LIFE

## IN THE MPA PROGRAM

*Tajudeen Basiru is currently a graduate student in the MPA program at Texas State University. He was recently awarded the Honor Society Phi Kappa Phi's Love of Learning Award 2017. Nicole Foy is also a current MPA student who attended The BICIUS Conference in November, 2017.*

## Tajudeen Basiru

My name is Tajudeen Basiru, an international student from Nigeria. I started my Master of Public Administration (MPA) at Texas State in Fall, 2016. I have an MD from Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria and a few years of working experience mainly with non-profit organizations that care for people living with HIV/AIDS. Some of my recent awards include Graduate Scholarship Award (2017/2018), Balanoff Family Scholarship Award (2017), Barney and Linda Knight Scholarship Award (2017) and now the Phi Kappa Phi 2017- Love of Learning Award.

I applied for the Phi Kappa Phi 2017- Love of Learning Award. It was not difficult as I made my application almost at the last minute when I realized it was the only award I was eligible for. In my opinion, my resume was probably the most important factor in the selection process. I would advise any student applying to watch the time

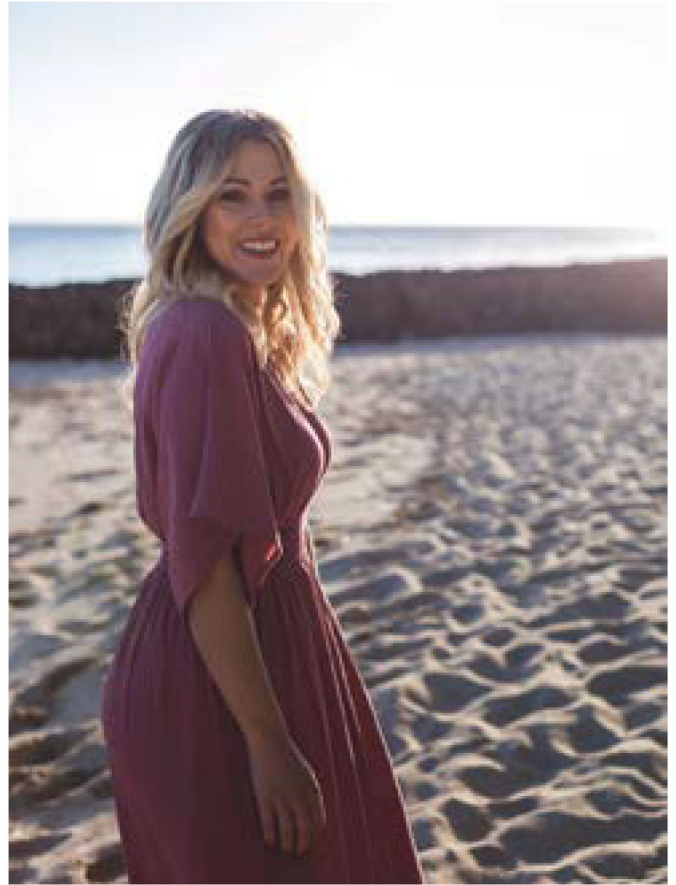
line, the eligibility criteria and most importantly format their resume in a very professional manner. I plan to use the funds from this award to supplement payment of my tuition at Texas State.



# Nicole Foy

In March of 2017 I made the decision to separate from the Navy after serving eight fulfilling years on active duty. I decided to relocate to Texas and attend grad school. I was accepted to Texas State's MPA program from my duty station in Italy. As fate would have it, with this acceptance letter came a call from Dr. Patricia Shields offering me a wonderful opportunity. She was and is currently the editor of *Armed Forces & Society*, a quarterly, peer-reviewed academic publication. Dr. Shields offered me a job as her research/editorial assistant and under favorable circumstances I gladly accepted her offer.

This position has opened my eyes allowing me to see a whole new world pertaining to the military. The journal publishes scholarly articles, book reviews, and research notes encompassing many aspects of the military that also tie together with public policy and public administration. This interdisciplinary, international journal has provided me the opportunity to work with military scholars and leaders throughout the world.



In November 2017, The Biennial International Conference of the Inter-University Seminar (IUS) on Armed Forces and Society was held. I attended the DC conference to assist at the editorial board meeting and to connect with *Armed Forces & Society* authors. There were many panels held at the conference that covered current and theoretical issues, utilized qualitative/quantitative methods, historical and comparative perspectives, and policy relevant themes by applying cutting edge research. The conference presented opportunity for remarks and dynamic commentary issues such as veterans, special operations

forces, military families, military contractors, women in the military, and the relationship between the president and his military advisors. The conference helped me recognize that success does not solely depend on obtaining academic credentials, but also on the quality of knowledge contributions.

Dr. Patricia Shields has served as editor-in-chief of *Armed Forces & Society*, which is rated seven among military studies journals, since 2001. Dr. Shields has proven to be a prolific scholar, publishing four books and over sixty book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles on topics such as military recruitment, civil-military relations, gender integration, military privatization, veterans, peace studies, peacekeeping, conscription, military bureaucracy, and military organization theory. Dr. Shields is an influential scholar and teacher.

Dr. Shields was recognized for her contribution to knowledge about civil-military relations at the conference through the Morris Janowitz Career Achievement Award. This award is reserved for a select few scholars.

As an MPA student it is an honor to have had the opportunity to attend this conference and work for Dr. Shields. It was good to see a Texas State MPA faculty receive this kind of international recognition. Other

MPA students who have served as editorial assistants for *Armed Forces & Society* include: Zohaib Qadri, Colin Smith, Travis Whetsell, Christie Pogue, Nick Johnson, and Jacob Rodriguez.



# LEADING A FAITH-BASED NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

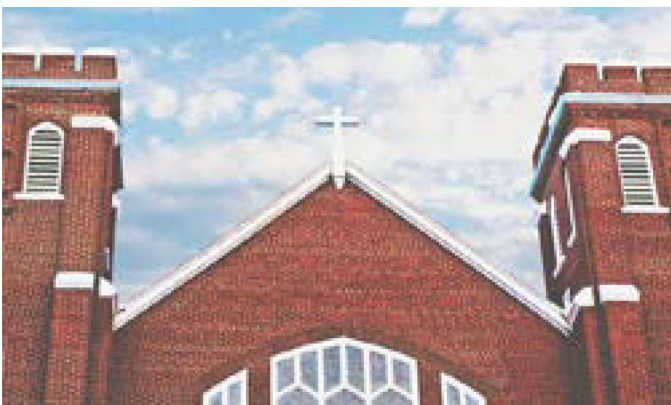
APPLYING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY BASED APPROACHES BY PATRICIA SHIELDS

When I agreed to take on the challenges of congregation president at Abiding Love Lutheran Church in 2016-17, I had no idea how useful my public administration background would be. As president, I led the council in familiar public administration functions such as setting agendas, passing budgets, formulating policy, planning and staff hiring. My knowledge of basic PA helped me feel comfortable and at home with these responsibilities.

Church congregations make up almost 20 percent of all nonprofit organizations in the US. Like all

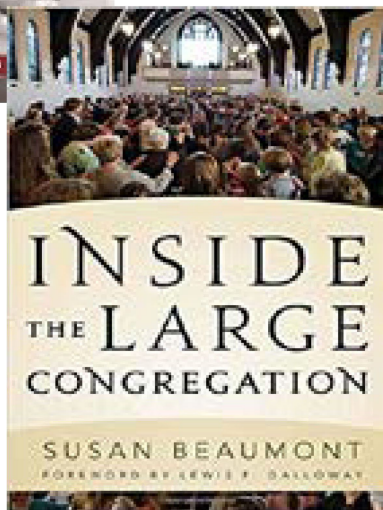
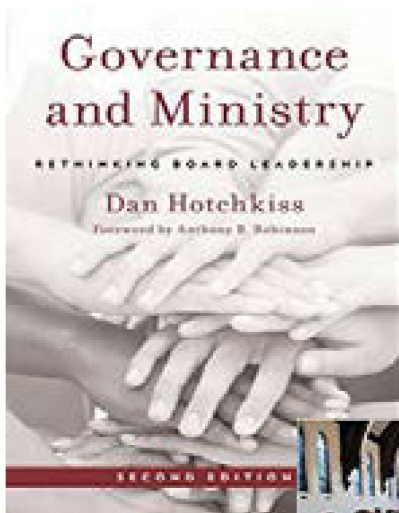
nonprofits, they engage in activities such as fundraising, volunteer management, staffing, organizational communication and policy development. I was happy to draw upon my knowledge of PA and the experience as MPA Director to meet these challenges at Abiding Love.

I took over as president when the church had begun to move away from traditional governance to policy based governance. A policy based framework allows for a council that focuses on strategic goals and program evaluation. Under the traditional structure the council was responsible for program details and was often bogged down in minor details of a program event (what time to start the church yard sale). This crowded out time that should be devoted to long run concerns like mission and evaluation. It



also meant that church leadership were spending an extraordinary amount of time in meetings (36 – 55 a year for the president). This was ineffective, inefficient and made recruitment of new council difficult.

I read useful books like *Governance and Ministry* by Daniel Hotchkiss and *Inside the Large Congregation* by Susan Beaumont as the church considered a radical revision of the constitution. Although churches face unique challenges, these books seemed very comfortable because they applied many familiar ideas from public administration (particularly strategic planning) to church governance change.



The church used many research techniques familiar to public administrators such as survey research, document analysis and small group discussion. Since, like all public administration programs, decisions should reflect and be informed by the people we serve, this research was critical to our efforts. Myself and those responsible for the governance change spent many hours in small and large group meetings with members of the congregation learning and explaining the new system. Our time was rewarded by a unanimous vote to change the constitution.

As 2018 approached, I was happy to turn over the reins to a new president and a reconfigured smaller council. I also was pleased to see how much of the experience was informed by my life as a public administration professor. I am eager to apply this experience, all of the reading and future reading to educate students about non profit management.

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# DIVERSITY

## AT TEXAS STATE

The current cohort of MPA students is diverse with 31% of Hispanic/Latino students, 16% African American Students, 46% white students and 4% from other ethnicities. Apart from a strong commitment to maintain a diverse student body, the Texas State MPA program uses a multi-pronged approach to promote a climate of inclusivity. Our university offers the “Allies Training” program which helps “participants with information and resources that will help eliminate myths, misconceptions, and stereotypes often associated with LGBTQIA persons”. Dr. Emily Hanks, Dr. Thomas Longoria and Dr. Nandhini Rangarajan have completed this training and are now formally recognized as “Allies” of Texas State University. Dr. Patricia Shields represented us at the Executive Women in Texas Government Conference to understanding the working climate for female administrators in the state and to inform potential female MPA students about our program. Our faculty also participate in the Conference of Minority Public Administrators and in ASPA’s Section for Women in Public Administration.

Our students work on Applied Research Projects that relate to diversity and inclusivity issues. Dr. Mitchell Sellers, MPA alum featured in this edition completed a project entitled “Discrimination and the Transgender Population:

A Description of Local Government Policies that Protect Gender Identity or Expression”. MPA Alum Samantha Park, worked on a project entitled “Female City Managers in Texas: A Content Analysis of Resumes to Identify Successful Career Path Trends”. We, as a faculty are committed to giving our students a culminating experience that is personally meaningful and one which deepens faculty and students’ understanding of diversity and multicultural issues in public administration through the research process.

### University Enrollment by Ethnicity 2017-2018

White	47%
Hispanic/Latino	36%
Black/African American	11%
Other Race	5%

### Texas State MPA Enrollment by Ethnicity 2017-2018

White	46%
Hispanic/Latino	31%
Black/African American	16%
Other Race	4%

# HOBBY CENTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

## AT TEXAS STATE

The William P. Hobby Center for Public Service at Texas State aims to train public and non-profit managers in ethical values and technical competencies associated with outstanding public service. Part of the Hobby Center's role is to host the Certified Managers Program (CPM), a nationally accredited comprehensive statewide management development program. Additionally, the Hobby Center provides opportunities for current public administration students to interact with practitioners, as well as offering internship and fellowship placement for students throughout the year.

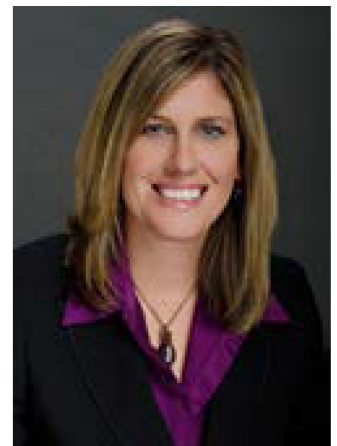
### NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

On September 29th, 2017 Dr. Howard Balanoff cohosted the National Academy of Public Administration Conference: Governing Across the Divide: Innovations in Local Government at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas in Austin, Texas. Dr. Balanoff represented Texas State University's William P. Hobby Center for Public Service.

The conference consisted of guest speakers including Julian Castro, former secretary of Housing & Urban Development, Harvey Kronberg of the Quorum Report, Dustin Haisler who is Chief Innovation Officer and Publisher of Governing magazine and Government technology magazine.

Two Texas State Alumni attended this event. Larry Gonzales is a member of the Texas House of Representatives for House District 52. Larry graduated with his Master's

Degree in Public Administration in 2014. Another Notable alumnus that attended was Brenda Eivens. Brenda has served as the City Manager for Cedar Park since 2006. Both Larry and Brenda served on the plenary panel hosting discussions about Innovative Policy Solutions Instituted by Local Government: Focus on State-Local Relations, Economic Development and, Immigration.







# HOG WILD CONFERENCE

CENTER FOR RESEARCH, PUBLIC POLICY, AND TRAINING

On May 22nd the Department of Political Science partnered with the law firm DNRBHZ (Denton, Navarro, Rocha, Bernal, Hyde & Zech, P.C.) to host the 14th Annual Hog Wild conference. The Hog Wild conference is a “free continuing education seminar energizing local government officials & employees”. The Department invited graduate students to attend as well, to utilize the opportunity for learning about local government and networking. Deputy Secretary of State Coby Shorter

III was the keynote speaker, and breakout sessions included topics such as legislative updates, issues facing police departments, development concerns and issues, drone use, and home rule initiatives. Four graduates from the Master in Public Administration program, panelists Samantha Alexander, Kyle Carvell, Ricardo Zavala, and Jennifer Strahl, presented in a session “Texas State University Graduate Student Research Panel Presentation”. Additionally, Dr. Grasso, Chair of the Political

Science Department, Dr. Shields, Director of the Master of Public Administration Program, Dr. Crossett, Director of the Master of Legal Studies Program, Dr. Longoria, Director of the Center for Research, Public Policy & Training, and Dr. Balanoff, Director of the William P. Hobby Center for Public Service, all gave remarks and some also led sessions.

By: Amy Perry

To learn more about the *Center for Research, Public Policy, and Training*, contact Dr. Tom Longoria at [tl28@txstate.edu](mailto:tl28@txstate.edu)



## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual HOG WILD 2017

**A Free Continuing Education Seminar *energizing*  
Local Government Officials & Employees**



# PROFESSOR RESEARCHES SAN MARCOS' POVERTY

By Josie Soehnge, The University Star, October 2017

Texas State faculty member Thomas Longoria in the department of Political Science is currently conducting research on San Marcos' poverty levels. According to the 2010-2015 poverty rate estimate, 37 percent of San Marcos residents were living in poverty. That estimate falls to 23 percent when students are taken out of the census data.

Longoria wrote a book titled, "Understanding Poverty in San Marcos, Texas: A Comparative Perspective." In the book, Longoria said, "In 2015, San Marcos marked a third consecutive year with the notable distinction of being the fastest growing city in the U.S. Despite this population growth, San Marcos also has the unfortunate distinction of having nearly 40 percent of the population living below the federal poverty level."

In his research, Longoria has seen that as student poverty is declining, non-student poverty continues to rise.

"I've found that the student poverty rate is actually

going down, and the non-student poverty rate is going up," Longoria said. "We don't know why. More research has to be done by really talking to students and non-students themselves, but there's no speculation that the employment for non-students, part time employment, might be more favorable. And as a result, students are employing themselves out of poverty, where as non-students are still facing some structural unemployment or underemployment problems."

While Longoria writes that, "In general, the poverty rate in a college town is often "discounted" because students are included in the U.S. Census calculation of the poverty rate.

Student poverty is indeed different from non-student poverty because college student poverty is viewed as a voluntary and temporary condition and is therefore not a public policy problem but rather a condition of the individual's student status," he still believes that student poverty is an issue that he would like to research further.

According to Longoria, “national evidence that hunger and homelessness among college students is a growing problem.”

“The issues of student poverty are really important,” Longoria said. “Student poverty is still poverty. A number of cities have begun to wrestle with the challenge of college student poverty. There are issues with students that are going to food banks or seeking public assistance because, while they’re students, they’re still dealing with housing instability and food insecurity.”

This distinction of this high poverty rate has a chain effect on the economic climate of San Marcos.

“These stories in part shape perceptions of San Marcos and these perceptions influence decisions on business relocation and retention, real estate development, and the decisions of individuals and families seeking a new community in a fast-growing region,” Longoria stated in his research.

As more people migrate to San Marcos, the poverty estimates statistics continue to change.

“One of the things that I’ve found which I thought is quite interesting is that the poverty in San Marcos seems to be shifting a little bit from certain neighborhoods to



other neighborhoods,” Longoria said. “As people come to live in the community, they bring with them certain packages of employment and family structure and things like that that make it less likely for them to be in poverty, so we do have this general sense that there are people moving into San Marcos, and where they move and their income is going to affect the poverty rates on the sub-city level. So there is definitely some change going on in the city on that basis.”

Longoria believes that this flow of people into San Marcos could be due to unaffordable housing in Austin.

“My speculation is that people in the city of Austin are getting priced out of affordable housing,” Longoria said. “A lot of them might be moving to San Marcos due to a supply of affordable housing for sale or for rent. So, San Marcos is going to be an attractive place