

OHIO NORTHERN UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE FOR CIVICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

NEWSLETTER FALL 2020

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the inaugural newsletter for the ONU Institute for Civics and Public Policy (ICAPP)! In this edition, we want to let you know more about ICAPP and meet our student fellows.

We are excited to use our collective expertise to serve citizens throughout the region. We will do this through research on public policy issues to help citizens better understand those issues. We pay particular attention to policies affecting citizens throughout the Industrial Midwest.

ICAPP is a natural extension of Ohio Northern's founder, Henry Solomon Lehr. He envisioned a university where its graduates would take their knowledge, skills and intellect into the world to serve the larger society. This has been a staple of an ONU education. ICAPP supports Lehr's vision through intentional programming and collaboration between faculty and students.

We believe an informed citizenry is necessary in a representative democracy. Toward this end, we will conduct public opinion polling, produce policy briefs and engage the public in a variety of ways. Teddy Roosevelt once said, "The average citizen must be a good citizen if our republics are to succeed."

This gets to the heart of our mission — to promote good citizenship. This is a bold initiative, and I am thrilled to be part of it. Ohio Northern has a rich tradition of public service, and ICAPP will be an important resource for policymakers and citizens throughout the region. I look forward to building something special and invite you to join "Team ICAPP."

Sincerely,

Dr. **Robert Alexander**, BA '94

OUR 2020 FELLOWS

HANNAH RAY

Hannah Ray, BA '20, is a 2020 graduate of Ohio Northern, where she majored in political science and statistics. During her time as a student, Hannah was active in many organizations, including Pi Sigma Alpha, Phi Beta Delta, Amnesty International, Model UN, and the Newman Civic Fellows. She will be pursuing her Master of Science in data analytics this fall from George Mason University while working at ONU as an area coordinator for the Office of Residence Life. She is excited to see firsthand what ICAPP will accomplish this upcoming academic year.



KENNEDY COOK

Kennedy Cook is a junior with double majors in political science and communications, as well as a minor in management. In addition to Kennedy's involvement in ICAPP, she is currently serving as the chapter life vice president of Alpha Xi Delta and is a member of the ONU President's Club.

ANDREW MANTENIEKS

Andrew Manteniek is a junior majoring in political science with a minor in public policy. He is currently serving as Ohio College Democrats northern regional director and Ohio Northern Student Senate's secretary of campus improvement.



OUR 2020 FELLOWS



HARRISON ZELLER

Harrison Zeller, BA '20, is a 2020 Ohio Northern University graduate, with a major in political science and minors in communication studies, geography, and public policy. In his four years at ONU, Harrison participated and served in a multitude of campus organizations including Phi Mu Delta Fraternity, Pi Sigma Alpha political science honorary, and Student Senate, serving as the Student Senate president for the 2019-20 school year. Thanks to his hard work at ONU, Harrison has received a graduate assistantship and will be continuing his education at Bowling Green State University in the field of public administration.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

Andrea Hoffman is a second year student double majoring in political science and public relations with minors in public health, pre-law, religion, and public policy. At Ohio Northern she is involved in Student Senate, Good News Bears, Public Relations Student Society of America, True North PR, Kappa Phi, and she is the PR manager and represents the political science program on the College of Arts & Sciences Dean Student Advisory Board. Andrea works as a resident assistant for the Office of Residence Life and the Office of Admissions. Outside of her involvement at ONU, she advocates for children with medical handicaps on the state and federal levels.





DR. ALEXANDER'S TRIP TO D.C. - MARCH 2020

With the help of ONU alumnus **Scott Miller**, BA '77, Dr. Robert Alexander was able to introduce ICAPP on Capitol Hill. He met with the offices of Senator Rob Portman, Senator Sherrod Brown, Representative Bob Latta, Representative **Tom Reed**, JD '96, and Representative **Mike Turner**, BA '82. Later, the duo hosted an ONU mixer where alumni spanning five decades learned more about ICAPP and swapped stories about their experiences in Ada as well as in the nation's capital. It was great catching up with former students and making new friends. Alexander is looking forward to meeting more alumni who may be interested in ICAPP's work.



ICAPP PARTNERS WITH BW AND OU TO CONDUCT THE GREAT LAKES POLL

ICAPP has already made a public splash by partnering with Baldwin-Wallace University and Oakland University to conduct the "Great Lakes Poll" of Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. These four states all voted for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012, and all four flipped and voted for Donald Trump in 2016. These continued to be in the public spotlight throughout the 2020 campaign. Media coverage of the polls by the collaborative appeared in outlets ranging from the Lima News to the New York Times to media across the globe. The second poll of these swing states included a number of questions designed to learn more about how citizens perceived the government's handling of COVID-19 as well as concerns about the future relating to the pandemic. The collaborative was able to conduct a third poll of just Ohio registered voters to gain additional insights surrounding COVID-19. Alexander co-authored several opinion pieces stemming from the polls that appeared in *USA Today* and CNN.com.



TRANSFORMATION OF OUR OFFICE

In addition to the creation of ICAPP, Ohio Northern University created a space in which the fellows and Dr. Alexander could collaborate together. When they first visited the space, it was evident that they wanted to make it their own. The fellows' goal was to transform the space into an open office that had character. By taking out office cabinetry, painting the walls, changing the flooring and adding a bigger work table, with the collaboration of ONU they have been able to not only make the space their own, but create a space that reflects ICAPP's goals and ambitions.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: MR. SPEAKER

ICAPP is proud to feature Robert R. "Bob" Cupp, BA '73, JD '76, in our alumni spotlight. He was recently elected as speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives and serves alongside Ohio's governor, Mike DeWine, JD '72. DeWine hailed Cupp's election as House speaker, referring to him as "a man of integrity who will serve Ohio well." Cupp has a broad and distinguished career in public service. He has served as Allen County commissioner, was a four-time state senator and an Ohio Supreme Court justice before being first elected a state representative in 2015. In the state Senate, Cupp served two terms as president pro tempore, the Senate's second-highest leader. Cupp, who has also shared his insights with ONU students as a consultant/visiting professor of applied political science at his alma mater, received a University Distinguished Alumni Award from Ohio Northern and an honorary degree from the ONU Pettit College of Law in recognition of his career of service. A graduate of Columbus Grove Local Schools, Cupp is a resident of Lima, Ohio.



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