

# Presidential Memories

*Reflections on the NPSA*

*from the 50th Anniversary Conference*

*Montreal, Quebec, Canada*



In 2018 we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Northeastern Political Science Association. Fifty years of serving the academic and social needs of Political Scientists and students from around the world. Fifty years and we are not just “still in business,” but thriving, growing, and continuing to develop as an organization and as a community of scholars.

But years are not the only way to measure an organization’s success. We can look at the fact that the organization’s first conference held in 1969 had only 5 panels and this year we are looking to host 133.

We can also look at the impact we’ve had on people’s lives. NPSA has for years welcomed young scholars and graduate students to join their more senior colleagues in presenting their research. Providing this nurturing experience leads many members to remain engaged throughout their careers, and in turn become the senior mentors to new, younger scholars.

We can also look at the stories that people tell about the organization as a measure of its success. These stories are numerous and come from participants at all stages in their careers from undergraduates to emeritus faculty.

We asked the past presidents of the Northeastern Political Science Association to reflect on their experiences with NPSA and are delighted to present responses covering over 25 years of presidential terms. Some of the responses focus on the interpersonal stories that make us a unique organization. Others highlight some of the trials and tribulations the organization has weathered over the years – challenges that we have collectively met and overcome.

And, with very little organizational rhyme, or reason, we happily share these stories with you, culminating in a wonderfully written and presented homage’ penned by our current president, Lanethea Mathews-Schultz.

Forward by **John O’Rorke, NPSA Treasurer, 2018**

**Where to begin: If an army marches on its stomach, then an organization requires sound finances to survive. Unfortunately, this has not always been the case for NPSA, as our first contributing past president attests:**

*“Much of my year as president was routine, not much of anything to report. One issue did come up—a finance problem. I can't recall much detail (e-mails from the time disappeared when I moved from Alfred University to Penn State Harrisburg; I threw out my files about 10 or so years after I had left the office). So I don't know if I have enough detail to provide a "story." I do recall that it was a finance matter brought to me by our treasurer, Don Buzinkai. I know that we worked on it over a relatively short period of time (a month or so?). And I appreciate his comment at the end of the process. He told me "Thank you for caring." That I remember vividly! Garrison Nelson (in an e-mail to the whole crew) spoke of some problem that he had to attend to a couple years or so after my experience. I don't know if that was related to mine or not. I do know that I felt that Don and I had taken care of the immediate problem that he brought to me. So, I don't know if that is enough detail. I do recall that, as program organizer and, the next year, as President, I felt pretty well served by Don and our secretary (if I recall his position correctly) Dave Rebovich.” 1992-1993, Steven Peterson, Alfred University*

**The finances of the organization have ridden a roller coaster for much of its history, but it has survived, attracted “good talent” in spite of the hardships, and continued to grow.**

*My NPSA involvement was minimal before becoming Program Chair in 1995 and President in 1996. Guided by Don Tannenbaum's carefully constructed NPSA succession grid, there was a 1994 vacancy for an Americanist from the New England PSA. The logical choice was the 1990 NEPSA President Robert C. Wood of Wesleyan, LBJ's second Secretary of HUD (and father of US Senator Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire). Then in his 70s and reluctant to get involved, Bob offered the opportunity to Diana Evans of Trinity who also passed on it.*

*The succession grid required a New England Americanist for 1994's Program Chair. With none forthcoming from NEPSA and my reluctance to manage a conference on my initial appearance, the New Jersey PSA had to step in and Russell Harrison of Rutgers-Camden, a former president, agreed to serve as president again and to prepare the 1994 program for the Providence meeting. With little time for preparation, Russell's program was prepared on Dbase-3, somewhat difficult to read resulting in different panels scheduled to meet at the same times in the same rooms. Needless to say, a lot of anger appeared at the open meeting of the members. Somewhat embarrassed by the mix-up, Russell told me that once the program had been prepared and the meeting had begun, the Program Chair's job was done and the chair could depart the meeting. I assumed and still do that the PC remains on site until the final bell rings.*

*With this unfortunate initial encounter with NPSA and my program scheduled for Newark with scholars, many of whom I did not know, and a city with which I was wholly unfamiliar, I began to regret accepting Bob Wood's offer. Had I known of the near insolvency of NPSA at the time, I definitely would have punted.*

*But it was spending quality time with Nancy McGlen, Jo Renee Formicola, Joe Melusky, Jeff Kraus, Tom Brogan, Tom Baldino, Don Tannenbaum, and even Don Buzinkai whose deep commitment to make NPSA succeed in spite of its problems that led me to remain involved and to follow Joe Melusky as NPSA Executive Director. The willingness of my NPSA cohorts to accept the changes that Nancy and I made gave NPSA a stronger level of professionalism and the upgrading of our guest speakers along with APSA's newfound acceptance of our transformation to the point of including the national presidents on our program made all of this worthwhile. 1995-1996, Garrison Nelson, University of New Hampshire*

## **Even though it really is a lot of work.**

*My memory stems from a conversation with Tom Baldino (also a past president). I was debating becoming the Pennsylvania delegate to the NPSA Executive Committee knowing full well that I would one day be running the conference. His famous words were "It will give you an opportunity to meet political scientists from around the country" and "It won't be that much work". While it is so true that I have had the opportunity to meet so many wonderful colleagues from around the nation and the world (many of whom have become good friends as well), it was not at all true that the conference was easy to run. I commend all the past presidents who survived organizing the NPSA conference.*

### **2013-2014, Paula Holoviak, Kutztown University**

*I started serving on the NPSA board in 2003 as Second Vice-President, which gave me one year to get over my fear and apprehension of serving as Program Chair for the 2004 Boston Conference. I feared that I would be overwhelmed by the task of putting together the program, with so many panels to schedule and so many other details of the conference to worry about. However, and to my great joy, with the support of the rest of the board and the colleagues who had already gone through this rite of passage, things went fairly well and I even enjoyed the process. Once the Boston conference was underway, it felt great to see a complex gathering of academics come together and go according to the plan. I could finally see the faces of the many names I encountered while putting the program together and I attended some of the panels that appealed to me while I was adding them to the schedule. All in all, the conference went well and I was relieved. Mission Accomplished! The other duty which automatically falls upon a program chair is that of serving as president of the association for the following year. I had, thus, the privilege of being president of the NPSA in 2004-05. There is not much to do while in that capacity, except assuring that the association lives on, assisting the incoming program chair and coordinating the tasks assigned among the board members and sections chairs. In December 2007, I offered to serve as webmaster after John O'Rorke, our treasurer, passed on the baton as we were just changing web provider. Since I had previously done work in this area for many years, the transition into the job went smoothly.*

*I am still the webmaster or web administrator of the association, a job I enjoy, except when there is technical bug that throws off the site and causes me to panic! However, since this very rarely happens, I have not had sleepless nights. I keep the website design simple, visitor-friendly and very easy to navigate. Among the many conferences I have been attending over the years, the NPSA Annual Meeting stands apart. In it I developed long-standing friendships, I enjoyed its distinctively warm atmosphere and its friendly community of scholars which welcome, encourage and nurtures new and old academics. **2004-2005, Azzedine Layachi, St. Johns University***

## **Or maybe not.**

*NPSA used to be a lot more casual. I was on summer vacation in Montana, getting off by myself with a walk up into the foothills of Emigrant Peak, when my mobile phone rang. It was Garrison Nelson, calling to ask me if I would like to be third vice president of NPSA. He explained that the first year I wouldn't have to do anything, then would become second vice president and wouldn't have to do anything, then would become first vice president and program chair, and would have to do a lot of work, and then become president, and not have to do anything. In those days NPSA was officially a coalition of the PSAs of New York, New Jersey (which no longer had any formal existence, if it ever had), Pennsylvania, and New England, and offices would rotate through the regions, and the President was supposed to pick someone from the same region. In New England, at least, there was no actual relationship with NEPSA. So there I was, elected by one person! (Garrison may have consulted with other Executive Committee members, but I'm not at all sure of that).*

*The job turned out to be interesting, but less demanding even than Garrison had described it, mainly because Jeff Kraus did so much work. It had been the program chair's job to find a venue, but at just about that time Jeff took advantage of a recession to negotiate long-term deals with the Crown Royal in Philadelphia and the Parker House in Boston so that we could alternate between the two cities every year, which gave our attendance a big boost. And the actual program committee had section heads who were doing an excellent job and were willing to stay on from year to year. The only real worry was negotiating the size of the room*

*block so that we didn't have to pay a penalty. This got interesting the year I was program chair, when we met in Philadelphia – online discount travel sites were just coming into their own, and a significant number of attendees booked rooms in the convention hotel at a price lower than our supposedly discounted one. Since that was the hotel's fault, not ours, they agreed to let Jeff and me go over their whole guest list and identify anyone registered for the conference, who would then count toward the block, so it turned out all right.*

*There was a bit of a crisis with Polity, but that sorted itself out more easily than it might have. U. Mass., which had always provided some support, stopped doing so, and without the office help article review got really bogged down; disgruntled authors were calling me as President to complain about their submissions getting no response. But, the editor did all the work of finding a great new editor, and we arranged for Palgrave to take over as publisher, making the process easier (or at least, so I assume).*

*So the position turned out to be fun, as well as an honor – and for a few years there I got room upgrades in the hotels where we met! **2003-2004, John C. Berg, Suffolk University***

### **And through it all, people brought change and development.**

*I attended and occasionally presented at NPSA meetings in the 1980s but was unaware of the financial and organizational travails described by others here until I became active in NPSA governance. NPSA became the preferred meeting for theorists for two reasons: one, the other political science professional meetings emphasized empirical political science; and, two, the concentration of political theorists at institutions in the Northeast. As a consequence, and to lighten the work load of future Political Theory Section chairs, I urged NPSA to divide political theory into the five current sections, Ancient and Medieval Political Philosophy, Modern Political Theory, Continental Political Thought, Democratic Theory, and American Political Thought. After the 2005 death of Wilson Carey McWilliams of Rutgers University, one of the Northeastern's stalwarts and an icon of the theory community, at my suggestion NPSA established two awards for best paper, one by a faculty member and one by a student, to recognize Carey's contributions to both scholarship and students. NPSA today is the second largest regional political science meeting (after the Midwest which considers itself a national meeting) largely through the participation of political theorists.*

*In 2003, I joined the NPSA Council as the New Jersey representative as the NJPSA had been inactive for a decade. Council asked that I restart the NJPSA. After some false starts, and with the generous support of the Eagleton Institute of Politics and the gracious help of Ingrid Reed of Eagleton, the NJPSA held a well-attended meeting at the Eagleton Institute in 2006 with over 80 in attendance. The New Jersey meeting continues to this day.*

*As I rotated through the offices of the Council, 2003-2007, I was proud to be a part of some other improvements in NPSA as a professional organization. We added a new section, Popular Culture and Politics, to reflect new directions in the discipline. We also re-directed our journal Polity, which had developed a reputation as a strictly a political theory journal, to a general political science journal. On an administrative level, we improved our web page, adopted an on-line submission and registration system, and began work on a constitution which would provide more legal and financial stability by incorporating.*

*While I feel very proud of the organization improvement during my tenure, the highlight for me personally was the Pi Sigma Alpha Dinner the year I was president. Newly elected Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, with Charles Ramsey, the police commission he had announced just that morning in tow, spoke. Nutter, a long-time political ally of mine in Philadelphia reform politics, gave a well-received speech to a packed room, the largest dinner attendance I can recall. Dianne Pinderhughes, APSA President was also in attendance, and I enjoyed spending time with her.*

*Since I left the Council, I have been pleased to see NPSA continue to develop. This year NPSA formed a non-profit to assist in fundraising, something I have been urging for years. Always known for its collegiality, a place to develop professionally without the pressure and restrictions of national meetings, this past year I was pleased to see how NPSA modified its lunches to expand the social spaces for professional interaction. **2006-2007, Bruce Caswell, Rowan University***

## **And we traveled to exotic lands.**

*The origins of the NPSA meeting in Newark, NJ - Dan Schulgasser worked in the Mayor's office and he worked to bring NPSA's conference to Newark in 1993. I respect Dan's life-long commitment to working on urban revitalization and community building in Newark. Dan was passionate about urban policy and politics, lived in Newark and dedicated his professional life to build Newark. In a small but important way, the NPSA conferences in Newark were at the beginning of an urban revitalization of the city. At the time of the NPSA conference, Newark had a reputation for being a high crime city, so the evening of our main reception – as we all walked from the hotel to the Seton Hall Law School - Mayor James had arranged to have a police officer stationed at every intersection along the way. Clearly Mayor James and Dan were determined to make us all feel welcomed and safe. NPSA returned to Newark in 1995. A few years after NPSA led the way, the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) had its annual meeting in Newark. The ASPA conference was sponsored by a growing Rutgers University, Newark."*

### **2001-2002, Craig Wheeland, Villanova University**

*The primary goal of my tenure on the Executive Committee was to return the meeting to Philadelphia after fascinating sojourns to exotic locales such as Albany, Providence, and Newark. Given the task, I immediately secured a hotel on the edge of the city, near the Schuylkill Expressway (known by locals as the "Sure-Kill Expressway"), with plenty of free parking, and large break-out rooms. I returned later to inspect the facility, only to be told that a jazzercise and dancing instructor workshop would be sharing the facilities with us. Frankly, I had an image of academics presenting research papers, while next door a dozen dance instructors were learning the mambo to ear-jolting tunes. It was time to find another location. After a mad dash about downtown Philly, I secured the Holiday Inn Express at 18<sup>th</sup> and Market Streets. The venue served the associations for many years, through many owners and managers, and with many memories of sharing the facility with peculiar groups, although no dancing instructors.*

*A constant issue during my tenure on the Executive Committee was the relationship with the International Studies committee. Much discussion, negotiation, and argumentation between the groups' leadership took place over finances and entitlements at meetings. Eventually, after a particularly tense meeting that included walk-outs, screaming, and threats, an amicable separation resulted for the mutual benefit of both groups.*

*I look back on my experiences with the Northeastern Political Science Association as a singular opportunity to associate with an extraordinary group of academics committed to the future of the discipline. I will always appreciate the camaraderie of the Executive Committee as we worked through momentary predicaments and celebrated many successes. 1997-1998, Thomas C. Brogan, Albright College*

## **And we changed partners and moved on.**

*As Past President of both NSPSA (2008-2009) and the International Studies Association Northeast (ISA-NE) region, I cherished the collaboration between the two organizations, which for many years co-hosted the annual northeast regional conference jointly. This collaboration was not always an easy partnership -- just ask Past President Garrison Nelson about the negotiations for the famed "Treaty of Boston"! I was very concerned when the ISA Northeast decided to hold a regional conference independently. How wonderful that NPSA has remained a vibrant and collegial space for intellectual engagement and that ISA-NE has also fared well since that time. I appreciate the continued effort of these two complementary organizations not to compete but to coordinate schedules and to alternate venues, and I am now quite glad there are not one but two viable regional options for PSC/IR scholars to present their research, as this allows for a more inclusive practice by both organizations. Three aspects of NPSA merit special note: practices of inclusion, gender representation, and warm collegiality. First, I appreciate how welcoming NPSA has been and continues to be of junior scholars and graduate students. I recall being thrilled to be included in my first NPSA conference to present my research. I also recall subsequently being chided by then-President (again, Garrison Nelson!) about appearing too many times on the conference program – until I reminded him that I had skipped a year of presenting at the conference while on maternity leave so was just "catching up" by presenting scholarship I had completed in the interim! This leads to my second observation regarding the NPSA's work toward a balanced gender representation in its leadership ranks. I note with appreciation that since its founding in 1969, NPSA has had 13 women serve as presidents, with the first – Victoria Shuck -- serving as early as 1972-1973 and the first "female succession" between Marion Just (1983-1984) and Susan Lederman (1984-1985). Thus, 26% of NPSA Presidents have been women. By way of comparison, the APSA's first female president, Judith Sklar, did not serve until 1989, and the first female succession in APSA was from Theda Skocpol (2002-2003) to Susanne Hoeber Rudolph (2003-2004). To date, only 10 of 113 - or just 8.8% -- APSA*

presidents have been women . So NPSA has a much better track record and I expect a continued commitment to gender parity going forward as we welcome Farida Jalazai, a long-time conference participant, after her term as NPSA Program Chair to the position of President.

Finally, as to collegiality, I cannot fail to mention the long-term commitments that many scholars have made to the NPSA, including one of my "officer recruits" John O'Rorke, long-time Treasurer extraordinaire, who also served as Teaching and Learning Section Chair for many years, and before him Tom Brogan as well as long-time executive director Jeff Kraus who always make a return to NPSA's annual conference a bit like coming home.

The continued vibrancy of the NPSA annual conference and of NPSA's journal, *POLITY* (now with University of Chicago Press) – which to my delight I found on the shelves of Hong Kong University's library when I visited there not long ago – demonstrate the value of the work to which you have all committed so much time and energy.

**2008-2009, Francine J. D'Amico, Syracuse University**

### **And we dealt with the world around us.**

One of my most vivid and lasting memories of NPSA was during the 2001 conference when I went to a session where my friend Chris Kelley was presenting a paper on American politics. Very quickly, the panel digressed into a discussion about the terrorist attacks on September 11th, which had occurred less than two months before. Many people in the room had firsthand experience on that day and were anxious to talk about what had happened. Several others were relatively new to the profession, myself included. It was the first semester I taught a political science class without supervision and I benefitted from how people approached their classrooms in the aftermath of the attacks. Unfortunately for those who were presenting papers, there was very little discussion about their research. Yet, it was an extremely useful discussion and a cathartic experience for most of us. The session was an example of the things I valued with NPSA: collegial interactions, thoughtful conversations, and good scholarship.

**2016-2017, Mark Sachleben, Shippensburg University**

### **Some of the tough times led to good stories to tell.**

I did recall {an} .... incident that you may or may not have been told about. In the 1980s, our Philadelphia meetings were held in the Sheraton Hotel at University City. At one of these meetings, it might have been 1987 but I'm not certain, we were all awakened in the middle of the night by a blaring fire alarm. Many no doubt hoped that it was a false alarm but, as it turned out, there really was a fire in the hotel. Consequently, we had to evacuate the hotel and found ourselves standing out on the sidewalk in the middle of the night in somewhat casual attire. I remember it was cold. Other details of that impromptu late night gathering I have suppressed.

**2005-2006, Joseph Melusky, St. Francis University**

One of the memorable conferences, perhaps for the wrong reasons, that I attended was held in Philadelphia in 2007. The conference hotel operated as a Marriott at the time, I think, and it offered the Association reasonable rates and a decent location in the city. But the hotel had also booked two other events to coincide with our meeting: one was a mattress sale that occupied one of the ballrooms on the mezzanine near the two other ballrooms that we were using, and the other was a high school senior prom. On Friday evening, as our members were gathering for the reception and dinner to follow, the prom attendees, all dressed in their tuxedos and gowns, clogged the halls, elevators, and stairs. As the evening wore on, anyone using the men's room encountered one or more young men, tuxedos disheveled and appearing inebriated. Worse, the facility was a mess, bearing the unmistakable odor of vomit. Not exactly what our conference attendees expect. While the students' behavior was far from exemplary, it was noted by Jeff Kraus, the Association's long tenured Executive Director, that the mattress salesmen were helping themselves to the Association's food! (I am indebted to Jeff for remembering this detail.) NPSA's Mattress-gate may never attain the level of notoriety as other "-gates," but it is most certainly seared into Jeff's memory. Fortunately, all of my other conference memories are positive and in keeping with the friendly, supportive and professional atmosphere for which the NPSA is known. **2009-2010, Thomas Baldino, Wilkes University**

**And through all, we made friends and developed relationships that last.**

*I remember the year that I was the President we met in Philadelphia. I had a great room (provided by the organization) I invited two of my junior colleagues in my department to “dinner.” One was Joe Marbach, a future NEPSA president and the other was Sunil Ahuja, another future NEPSA president. We sent Sunil, a first year department member for Philly Cheese Steaks. He didn’t really know what they were. I don’t know if we ever reimbursed him. I think I still owe him. Maybe Joe will pay since he’s now the President of Georgian Court University.*

**1998-1999, Jo Renee Formicola, Seton Hall University**

*My greatest memory is the warm collegiality of colleagues and friends, particularly those in leadership positions with whom I worked closely during my time as president. Indeed, in the year before I became president, I especially remember the support of these friends and colleagues in selecting the venue and in organizing the conference. I had never done something like that before, and putting together an entire conference is a large undertaking that requires many heads and hands. For this, and for their help in many other ways, I am immensely grateful to Tom Brogan, Craig Wheeland, Jeff Kraus, Francine D’Amico, Bruce Caswell and others. Of course, I am forever thankful to Jo Renee Formicola, who got me involved in the NPSA leadership in the first place! Thanks to everyone for the many fond memories.*

**2002-2003, Sunil Ahuja, Youngstown State University**

**And we found the fit that was right for us.**

*For me, Political Science Conferences are like the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. As a grad student I attended APSA a couple of times, and found it overwhelming at times being a nameless face in a sea of Political Scientists. Once I left graduate school it also became increasingly difficult to get the opportunity to present at APSA due to all of the submissions they receive. The first local conference I attended was the New England Political Science Association and it seemed way too small. There were hardly any panels in Comparative Politics or IR, so it also didn't feel like the right fit. For me, NPSA has been perfect. I was always able to present my work and get good feedback, and never felt like just another face in the crowd. Within a few years of attending NPSA I became Section Chair for Comparative Politics, and ultimately Program Chair etc. **2010-2011, Eric Budd, Fitchburg State University***

*My first NPSA conference was 1999 in Philadelphia. A friend asked me to serve as chair/discussant on a panel where I supposedly had some expertise. At the time, I was a member of another regional conference – one that seemed to make more sense considering where I went to graduate school (Miami University) and where I worked (Walsh University). I didn’t know anyone other than my friend who roped me into this. What I encountered was an amazingly welcoming and collegial group of professionals. After that, I presented a few times and served as chair and/or discussant on panels. When NPSA and ISA-NE split, I liked NPSA so much I stayed with it.*

*I got involved as a member of the organizing team in 2010, one of the co-chairs of the International Section moved and Eric Budd called to see if I would fill in. I was happy to do it for a year. It was fun and I got to meet even more of my colleagues, I like the creativity of putting panels together. One year turned into several more and then I was asked to serve as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President and Program Chair – from this position you serve four years on the board. After that, I went back to International Section chair and then, this past year a new position was created, Director of Member Engagement, and I now serve in that role. What I like about NPSA is that it is very welcoming to young professionals (I was one once). It is collegial and not cut-throat. It is not hard to get invited to join colleagues for lunch, dinner, drinks (or all) by people you just met. I like that I know more than just the IR and Comparative*

members and participants of NPSA. I appreciate that NPSA affords people opportunities to participate. I also like the tootsie pops that Bruce Caswell provides! My favorite memory of NPSA is one of my first ones. At my first NPSA conference I am a young professor. I see a guy in the elevator with a name tag that says O'Rorke. I was using a text by a guy with a similar name so I asked if that was him (remember, I don't know anyone and I am trying to make friends) and he says "no, different spelling" and that was it – you really needed to hear the tone! John O'Rorke would become one of my valued NPSA colleagues and mentors.  
**2014-2015, Koop Berry, Walsh University**

**Through it all we, dare I say it, persisted. We grew, improved, and still remained the small organization that makes us popular with so many, even though we are much larger and include more people from more places than ever before.**

The final homage' for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is from our current president, **Lanethea Mathews-Schultz, Muhlenberg College.**

**The Northeastern Political Science Association's Golden Jubilee**

*This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Northeastern Political Science Association and we are celebrating in good measure!*

*Contained in these pages are some of the memories and stories of the fifteen women and thirty-five men who have served as president of the NPSA. Collectively, our professional accomplishments and career paths offer a window into the diversity and richness of our field; our individual lives reveal the significance of personal relationships in forging careers as political scientists.*

*In an effort to learn more about the NPSA's past presidents, I set about collecting biographical information about as many as possible. With the help of Muhlenberg undergraduate Peter Carroll, I gathered c.v.s, biographical statements housed on department webpages and, in several cases, obituaries culled from online newspapers (I was pleasantly surprised to discover that a handful of past presidents have Wikipedia pages, including Douglas Hidgkin, Bates College, NPSA President 1986-7).*

*My dataset is partial and incomplete, my method completely haphazard and it is possible that some of the information I gathered is imperfect, even incorrect. I have made no attempt to be systematic in my observations. Please accept my sincere apologies for those past presidents whom I missed. Despite the shortcomings of my method, the information I gathered is representative enough to convey something about the individuals who have led our association for the past 50 years. And, in learning something about our past presidents, I've developed a different, deeper appreciation for the organization that they have helped to sustain.*

*NPSA past presidents have taken diverse routes to becoming political scientists. We've been educated in public and private schools, military academies, prep schools, religiously-affiliated institutions, American universities and colleges, and institutions outside of the US (including Australian National University). Alongside our diverse educational experiences, several past presidents have had careers outside of the field. Will Pickney (CUNY Graduate School, NPSA President 2015-16) worked as a First Grade Detective and an investigative police officer for the NYPD. During the Great Depression, 1982 NPSA President Allen Lee sold magazines and carried newspapers, worked as a farm hand and drove a dairy truck—he was also a Christian Minister. Before pursuing political science, David Larson (University of New Hampshire, NPSA President 1980-81) enlisted in the US Air Force, eventually serving as an intelligence officer in Germany before returning to civilian life and earning his PhD at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1963. Victoria Shuck (Mount Holyoke College, NPSA President 1972-3)—namesake of the APSA annual award for the best book on women and politics—worked in the Office of Price Administration before moving into political science.*

*We've excelled as students. Several NPSA presidents were high school valedictorians, many are members of Phi Beta Kappa. Not all of us hold PhDs in political science; we've worked in sociology departments, social science departments, history departments, economics departments, and departments of public administration and public policy. While most of us work in institutions in the northeastern region of the United States, Farida Jalalzai, incoming 2018-19 NPSA President, is Hannah Atkins Chair and Head of Political Science at Oklahoma State University.*



*We've served our discipline and not only in our roles as NPSA presidents. Donald Buzinkai (NPSA President 1985-6) was the founding chair of the Department of Political Science at Kings College. Joseph Melusky (St. Francis University, NPSA President 2005-06) coordinated the NPSA employment service for years, working to link employers and job candidates together at our annual meetings. Russell Harrison (Rutgers University-Camden) served as NPSA President twice, first in 1991 and then again in 1994.*

*We have been such prolific publishers that I quickly abandoned an early attempt to arrive at a rough count of book publications. Suffice it to say that most of us have very long vitae—and Garrison Nelson (University of Vermont, NPSA President 1995-6) must hold the record at about 30 pages! Our scholarship has had an indelible mark on the discipline of political science. Jo Renee Formicola (Seton Hall University, NPSA President 1998-99) was previously named the Political Scientist of the Year in the State of New Jersey. In 2009, William Rich (Wellesley College, NPSA President 1999-2000) was awarded the Norton Long Career Achievement Award from the Urban Section of the American Political Science Association for his contributions to the study of urban politics.*

*NPSA past presidents are passionate and award-winning teachers. We have deep connections to our students and to the mission of higher education. Eugene Miller's (Ursinus College, NPSA President 1974-5) comparative politics classroom was described as a "Southern Pennsylvania version of the Socratic Lyceum." Stephen Koff (NPSA President 1977-78) founded Syracuse University's study abroad program—he was such an avid scholar of European and Italian politics that he was awarded the Knight in the Order of Merit by the Italian Government. Nancy McGlen (Niagara University, NPSA President 1996-7) was inducted into the WNY Women's Hall of Fame for her personal and professional efforts inspiring and educating women. Sunil Ahuja (Youngstown State University, NPSA President 2002-03) was selected as a Fellow with the American Council on Education. Marion Just (Wellesley College, NPSA President 1983-4) received an Excellence in Mentoring Award from the APSA Women's Caucus; her book, *Crosstalk* (University of Chicago Press, 1996) was named an Outstanding Book in Political Communication and she holds APSA's Murray Edelman Award for a Distinguished Career in Political Communication.*

*Many have founded internship programs, study abroad experiences, and professional development seminars to enhance our teaching and research. Frank Colon (NPSA President 1989-90) received the Washington Semester Program Award for his leadership of Lehigh University's program. Mark Sachleben (Shippensburg and the NPSA's immediate past president) annually leads students to the Washington Model Organization of American States. Naomi Wish (Seton Hall, NPSA President 1987-8) developed and runs an Israel Study Tour with her students. Koop Berry (Walsh University, NPSA President 2014-15), recognized for her excellence in teaching by Ohio Magazine, is the driving force behind All Politics is Local, a regional undergraduate research conference that annually engages more than 100 students. Francine D'Amico (Syracuse University, NPSA President 2008-09) was recently appointed to the position of teaching professor in the international relations program at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs in recognition of her accomplishments in teaching, advising, service and curricular and co-curricular development.*

*NPSA presidents have served as Deans, Provosts, and directors of institutes—Craig Wheeland (NPSA President 2001-02) currently serves as the Vice Provost for Academics at Villanova University. Unsurprisingly, we share a large presence in state and local politics and in the kinds of voluntary associations that are the lifeblood of public life. Elmer Cornwell (Brown University, NPSA President 1970-1), served as Parliamentarian for the Rhode Island House of Representatives. Susan Lederman (Kean College, NPSA President 1985-85) was President of the League of Women Voters of the United States and President of the Temple Sinai in Summit, NJ. Bruce Caswell (Rowan University, NPSA President 2006-7) is a former Democratic Committeeman, member of the Democratic State Committee and of the Community College of Philadelphia Foundation Board. Tom Brogan (Albright College, NPSA President 1997-98) was a delegate to the 1972 Democratic National Convention during Hubert Humphrey's second presidential bid. Douglas Hidgkin (Bates College, NPSA President 1986-7) was active in the Republican Party in Maine and ran for office several times. John Berg (Suffolk University, NPSA President 2003-04) previously served as legislative research assistant to Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-WI). Naomi Wish (Seton Hall University, NPSA President 1987-8) served as the President of the Non-profit Academic Council.*

*Thomas Baldino (Wilkes University, NPSA President 2009-10) serves as the faculty associate to the Legislative Office of Research Liaison of the PA House of Representatives. Sondra Farganis (New School for Social Research; NPSA President 1988-89) is a Trustee of the Poughkeepsie Public Library. Similar to these individuals, I found no past president of the NPSA without a clear record of public service, whether sitting on citizens' advisory committees, serving as presidents of community organizations or members of PTAs, community foundations, and nonprofits.*

*Most significant to me in reading through biographical information about NPSA past presidents, was the constant reminder that NPSA's past presidents are not merely political scientists; they are mothers, fathers, sisters, spouses, lovers of baseball (given our concentration in the northeast, I will refrain from commenting on the relative balance of Yankees versus Red Socks fans), avid tennis players, devotees of dogs (Larson raised border collies) accomplished musicians and vocalists (Hidgkin is a tenor), field hockey coaches, chess champions (Marvin Maurer, Monmouth College, NPSA President 1975-6), Boy Scouts, volunteer firefighters (James Rediel, SUNY-Albany, NPSA President 1973-4) members of planning commissions, grandparents, neighbors, friends, soldiers (Cornwell was drafted into the Navy Seabees in 1944, before completing his BA at Williams College; Walter Filley, SUNY-Binghamton, NPSA president in 1971 previously served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division in Western Europe in the mid 1940s; Allen B. Lee, Washington and Jefferson College, NPSA President 1982-83 served as a Staff Sergeant in the US Army in World War II).*

*NPSA past presidents are not alone, of course, in the richness of their lives—they've come from the membership of the association, served as program chairs, discussants, and panel presenters alongside many others. What this brief inquiry convinced me of is the extent to which the biographies and personal stories of NPSA past presidents are undoubtedly woven into the history of our association, our collective experiences as political scientists, and our personal relationships across generations of annual meetings. It is the personal nature of professional relationships that so many past presidents have alluded to in these pages. It is likely that these are the same experiences which have made NPSA past presidents such accomplished political scientists.*



**Here's to the next 50 years!**