Sarah Luyengi jumped at the chance to study abroad. Page 2.
Sarah M. Luyengi graduated from the School of Public Service in early June with a degree in International Public Service. Before graduation, she submitted this reflection piece for publication.

BY SARAH M. LUYENGI
School of Public Service

In two weeks, I’ll be wearing walking on a stage in an uncomfortable cap and gown to receive my degree. The sea of tassels and pointed hats in a congested auditorium will be at a standstill for three hours. It will go by fast — barely even a minute as I shake hands with various people and, suddenly, a diploma scroll will be thrust into my hands. I’ll pause for flashing cameras and take a seat. But, while the presenters drone on about “success” and “achievement,” will I be paying attention?

My time at DePaul University as a graduate student has gone by quickly. Only two years ago, I was at another endless ceremony, receiving my B.A. in English. Years before that, I was in my high school’s football field saying goodbye to my friends. It is a surreal experience to finish school, whether high school or university. Sure, you have that melancholic feeling of things coming to an end — but also that sense of new beginnings.

When I arrived in the fall of 2014, I carried a new perspective: I would be going to school to focus on a career, while before, I felt unsure what I wanted to do. Instead of large classes with distracted professors, I found myself in smaller classes with attentive professors.

Time flew by with challenging course work and stimulating class discussions, and before I knew it, my time here was ending.

Several classes and professors made a lasting impression. Courses such as International Dimensions of Public Service (MPS 510) and International Organizations Seminar (MPS 614) and professors who featured backgrounds in nonprofit management, fundraising and international field work guided me throughout the program.

The highlights? My internships and study abroad experience.

My internships included work as Communications Outreach Intern for Vanavevhu, a small nonprofit that assists child-headed households in Zimbabwe, and as a Program Assistant for World Chicago, a larger nonprofit that specializes in citizen diplomacy through U.S. State Department exchange programs.

I applied the theories I learned in class in real-life situations, preparing me for a career in international development and sustainability or public policy.

The winter of 2015 marked a pivotal moment: I participated in SPS’s study abroad program in Tanzania. While the trip only lasted for 11 days, I found myself quickly immersed in the East African culture from the language of Swahili to the dish of ugali. I became acquainted with open marketplaces as well as the greetings of “jambo” and “habari.”

We visited orphanages, clinics, universities and government agencies, making public service direct and personal.

As I approach the end of my studies, I reflect on what brought me here. The ceremony may be three hours long, but I know that I and my fellow students will be thinking about the future. I would like to work for a small international nongovernment organization (INGO) or deal with public policy, but I see the possibilities as endless.

So, with an abundance of experience packed into two years, what’s next? Maybe, especially at first, I’ll experience rejection and failure. I’m sure that whatever the experience, it’ll make me stronger as a public servant.

If you’re a student or prospective student at DePaul, I suggest: Keep your options open and remember, “One must be firm and unchanging with regard to the end but gentle and humble as to the means.” — St. Vincent DePaul.

POSTSCRIPT: The graduation ceremony went well. Once I received my degree, I didn’t even realize that hours had gone by. It’s definitely a great experience that students shouldn’t miss!

To see all of SPS’s and DePaul University’s study abroad opportunities, visit here.
Helping communities connect

How the School of Public Service helps one professor fulfill her public service mission

So you want to know what inspires and motivates a professor. To understand Adrienne Holloway, an assistant professor in the School of Public Service, that’s as easy as ABCD.

That stands for Asset Based Community Development, among Holloway’s interests. It’s a strategy for community-driven development that relies on a community’s assets, not its needs, to solve problems. Once you identify those assets, such as people, organizations and institutions within a community, you help put them to work on the community’s needs.

Take Holloway’s first full-time job in public service. Fresh out of New York City’s Fordham University, she became residential services director at Promesa, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility in Bronx, N.Y.

She trained and mentored her staff, and she went into local neighborhoods, where she established relationships with community, business and government leaders. She explained and showed the good that Promesa was doing. She got acceptance, funding and continued licensing.

The program was well on its way, and so was she.

Today at SPS, Holloway specializes in community development, particularly in communities of color, plus social welfare policy, with a focus on housing. Her interests also include regional policy, poverty studies and nonprofit management.

She said her work at Promesa helped inspire and inform the work she does today.

“I found that the young men who were in my program often were coming from a drug treatment facility,” she said. “It became kind of their way back into mainstream society after being in a residential program. But I also found that young people were finding their way into my program because their parents could no longer afford to care for them.”

She said that moved her to study and understand the diverse needs of a community, to establish programs to meet those needs, to identify what went well and to improve those programs as needs change.

Collaboration and what she calls “small successes” serve as lynchpins throughout her work, interests and teaching.

Consider the successes of a public servant and a community. We agree that alleviation of hunger or homelessness represent big successes. Yet we must acknowledge and celebrate the small successes along the way, Holloway said, because that’s how we maintain momentum and drive to continue the work that we do to achieve the mission and the vision of community work.

And that’s where her students come in.

“The issues that we discuss in class are very multi-faceted, complicated and deep,” Holloway said. “Because of that, it can seem to be overwhelming and impossible to make a change of any significance. What I try to do is reiterate to students that it’s the small successes that keep us focused and motivate us.”

In community development, she finds small successes through bringing together various factions to develop a plan of action.

“Sometimes communities are not talking to each other,” she said. “We’re putting the past behind us, and we’re going to generate new energy, collaboration. That’s one example. Another is being able to speak highly of a community that others wouldn’t be able to see the beauty in.”

It all comes back to collaboration involving government, for-profit and nonprofit sectors – a School of Public Service emphasis.

“We can’t depend on one sector to address the compilation of issues,” Holloway said. “We need a very diverse set of stakeholders and a multi-tiered level of investment. Government isn’t going to be the most innovative and responsive. The private sector might not have the public will. Nonprofits have that community touch. When we combine them, we’re inviting such a strong team to move an initiative forward.”

Holloway emphasized collaboration and Asset Based Community Development in a recent paper titled “Asset Based Community Development and Community Safety in Communities of Color-Is ABCD a valid methodology to reach community safety goals?”

The paper, which she presented at the 40th annual conference of the National Council for Black Studies, serves as a highlight of her recent work and university-related activities and achievements. In recent months, she has been:

• elected as an alternate to the Faculty Council representing DePaul’s College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences for the 2016-17 academic year;

• recognized by DePaul’s Council on Community Engagement as a professor who had significant influence on university students in their development as engaged learners and leaders;

• and re-elected as chairperson for the City of Aurora Hispanic Heritage Advisory Board;

Holloway also continues to serve as faculty advisor for the DePaul chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha, a scholarly and professional program of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), which boasts more than 160 chapters at universities across the globe.

At the SPS End of the Year Party in early June, she oversaw the induction of 10 students, including five undergraduate students (please see page 8 of this newsletter), giving the local PAA some 45 new members since 2011-2012.

Such activities underscore why Holloway found herself in academia.

“I was trying to find a space where I could have as much of an impact as I could,” she said. “I’ve worked in community development. I’ve worked with community members. I’ve worked with young people trying to improve their lives. And I’ve worked with communities of color. Being at DePaul has given me an opportunity to do that same work in addition to academic work in the same space.”

It also has allowed her to do her work in the spirit of St. Vincent DePaul.

“One of the refreshing things about working at DePaul is this dual interest in my work and Vincentian values,” Holloway said. “From a teaching standpoint, if anything confirms that the work that I do is not disjointed, it’s not disconnected. If I was at a university where Vincentian values weren’t part of the community fabric, it would be challenging for me.”

‘One of the refreshing things about working at DePaul is this dual interest in my work and Vincentian values.’
Hello, my SPS family!

As many of you know, I’m the new(ish) Office Manager for the School of Public Service. I have never received a warmer welcome from so many people. I’d always heard great things about DePaul, and I’m happy to experience our community of teaching, learning and service first-hand.

The School of Public Service quickly became special to me. I appreciate the passion for service from staff, graduate assistants and faculty and the way in which the SPS program encourages students to make a positive effect on a person, a community or even a country through volunteering, attending public events, coordinating an event or studying abroad.

Now, a little about me.

I’m a Michigander from Lansing — I can show you where that is on my hand or on somebody else’s hand — but my roots go back to Chicago, where my parents grew up. As a child, Chicago became a second home to me since I had so much family here, and we’d visit for family gatherings, holidays and, of course, Cubs and Bears games.

I attended Michigan State University (Go Spartans!), and I graduated December of 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts in Advertising Management & Media Concentration.

Soon after I graduated, I accepted a job in Chicago as a social coordinator for an ad agency. After a few months, I discovered that it wasn’t the job for me — so I got out of there. I looked for something I would enjoy, something closer to my heart.

I live in the Lincoln Park area, and I would pass the DePaul’s main campus every day on my way to the train. I loved having that university setting down the street from me, and it got me thinking. Having attended Michigan State with all the pride and big-time college atmosphere, I missed that feeling. I missed the university environment. I set out to be a part of it again, this time as an employee.

So here I am at DePaul working for the School of Public Service, and it makes so much sense to me. I’ve always been drawn to non-profits, for example. I worked as an intern for one in Michigan where I helped local business and communities throw neighborhood events that would foster bonding of people and their communities.

The School of Public Service inspires me to continue raising awareness of public service, and I plan to do so through encouraging students to participate in events that promote involvement, service and action.

As office manager, I handle the SPS budget, plan events and post on social media. I update the SPS website with news articles, along with jobs and internships. I also answer questions — lots of questions — and I’m here to answer yours.

In short, I promote the School of Public Service, and I serve its students, staff, faculty and community.

If you have questions, or news you would like to share, please stop by my office next to assistant director of academic advising Katie Duclo’s office, or email me at mlatka@depaul.edu.
Joe Schwieterman, winner of the American Society of Public Administration’s Louis Brownlow Award for Outstanding Public Administration Professor, is a professor in the School for Public Service, and he’s an expert in public policy, transportation and urban planning.

The ASPA says its Brownlow Award recognizes “Chicago-area college instructors who have made outstanding contributions to public service education, excellence in teaching over a sustained period of time, and service to the wider community.”

Schwieterman has written numerous books, including “Terminal Town,” and peer-reviewed articles on the development of cities and transportation. He’s also director of DePaul University’s Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development, which promotes effective urban planning. Plus, he’s president of the Chicago Chapter of the Transportation Research Forum.

In an email memo that included news of the award, SPS Director Bob Stokes called Schwieterman “a true gem.”

“I am truly impressed at how much he works towards providing a very high quality student experience both inside and outside the classroom,” Stokes wrote.

Schwieterman shared his thoughts on teaching, students, SPS and public service.

What do you enjoy most about teaching at SPS?

That is an easy question: Students in SPS invariably have a strong sense of mission with respect to improving the communities in which they live. We see this in their personal statements written prior to gaining admission to our school, class discussions, and research papers. Our students want to effect change, whether in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors.

The shared values of our students create a spirit of cooperation in the classroom that is less pervasive in other programs. Of course, our students also strive for good grades, but they always “keep their eye on the prize,” which is working cooperatively with others to resolve public service problems. As a professor, I find that inspiring.

What makes urban planning and transportation particularly urgent topics?

To borrow a phrase from Charles Dickens, Chicago is a “tale of two cities” right now, with a downtown that is flourishing and many neighborhoods that are suffering greatly. The problems are especially acute on the Far South and West sides. Many neighborhoods are bereft of the aesthetic qualities and connectivity they need to make them attractive for redevelopment — and job creation. Some of my research shows why our city needs to better leverage its transportation assets — rails, roads and airports — as well as get a handle on infrastructure needs of low-income areas if it is to remain a premier Global City.

What got you interested in transportation?

I grew up near Lima, Ohio. As a kid, we would make occasional trips to Chicago, which cultivated my fascination with cities. Our tradition of coming to the city on the passenger trains of the Pennsylvania Railroad spurred my interest in transportation, which ultimately grew to encompass public transit, urban history and, finally, world geography.

In what ways can students feel as though they're "doing good" through work in public policy and urban planning.

A remarkable aspect of SPS students is the creative ways they find to help make cities more livable places, even while they are busy with our classes. They find internships, volunteer opportunities and leadership positions with advocacy groups, community development organizations, city departments, and consultancies. We are also extraordinarily proud to have alumni who have advanced to senior leadership positions in such prominent organizations as the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago Community Trust, Metropolitan Planning Council, Pace Suburban Bus. SPS has a strong presence in the region that is growing stronger every year.

What would you say to a student considering the SPS program?

We allow you to develop skills and expand your network in myriad ways, not only through our extensive Loop Campus class offerings, but with study abroad experiences, internships, research opportunities, and professional events. We help you build a network among students and practitioners that is of tremendous value after graduation. Consider an example: I often ask students to describe the size of the “DePaul network” they have built through classroom interactions, and their responses always impress me. Most have networks of dozens of people. The networking process is spurred on by the fact our students are very technologically savvy, so they effortlessly create networks, often through LinkedIn, to stay in touch. Such connections are a springboard for jobs, lifetime friendships, and volunteer opportunities.
On a personal mission to end homelessness

Nonie Brennan, DePaul University’s American Society for Public Administration alumni award winner, serves as chief executive officer of All Chicago, a nonprofit organization that works with a vision of “Making Homeless History.”

She also works as a part-time faculty member at the School of Public Service. She graduated from SPS in 2007, and she earned a Doctor in management from Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University. Her research focused on nonprofit collaboration.

Brennan talked with us about her focus on homelessness, her work at All Chicago and more.

Please discuss your role at All Chicago.

I’m the CEO. And as such, I’m the lead staff person of the organization. My job is to set the vision for the organization and move it toward that vision. My role is big-picture high level, strategic in nature.

How does your organization work?

We have three specific program areas. One: The Emergency Fund, which focuses on homelessness prevention and provides immediate financial assistance. Two: Chicago Alliance, focusing on strengthening the city’s homeless system. Three: The Learning Center, which provides training, technical assistance and research around homelessness. Our organization was designed to provide backbone support to Chicago’s homeless system, and we work hand in hand with the City’s Department of Family and Support Services to execute Chicago’s Plan to End Homelessness: Plan 2.0.

There’s no question we’re making a difference. We are very close to ending veterans’ homelessness, and we are now attacking chronic homelessness.

What inspired you to focus on homelessness?

I came from a family that had a deep commitment to social justice. Both of my parents have had histories of working in communities of poverty or low income. My father was homeless as a teenager, and so our family had a great commitment to the issues that revolved around or connected to poverty.

I feel I have a responsibility to be a voice, to provide a voice, for people who have not had the opportunities I’ve had in life. This has been an important role for me, because I have the privilege of being able to address a very important community issue and address it in a positive way.

What inspired you to focus on homelessness?

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There’s no question we’re making a difference. We are very close to ending veterans’ homelessness, and we are now attacking chronic homelessness.

We are working to change the system and make sure we have established an environment in Chicago where everybody has a home regardless of where they are, where they’ve been and where they’re going. I won’t be satisfied until that happens.

What inspired you to focus on homelessness?

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I feel I have a responsibility to be a voice, to provide a voice, for people who have not had the opportunities I’ve had in life.

Every day, I think about lessons I learned in DePaul’s School of Public Service that are very relevant to my daily work.

The other thing that I really appreciate about DePaul is the spirit of St. Vincent DePaul that is very prominent in the culture of the school, and I have found that the lessons that we learn from St. Vincent DePaul are important and meaningful lessons that we can take through our careers. He was an intriguing and important leader that can help guide our community work.

Please discuss your focus as an SPS instructor on nonprofit collaboration.

In addressing the issue of homelessness in Chicago, we come at this from a collaborative-impact approach. We know that the only way that a major problem such as homelessness is resolved is to bring everybody together, where everybody shares a commitment to shared goals.

We measure our progress towards meeting those goals with a common database, we employ a variety of activities that keep us focused on those goals, we work hard to communicate consistently and openly, and we have an organization that provides the backbone support to keep this work moving forward.

I see every day the challenges and successes of Collective Impact, and I also see how far we have come and recognize we got here by working together.

‘I feel I have a responsibility to be a voice, to provide a voice, for people who have not had the opportunities I’ve had in life.’
His commitment to ethics, values, leadership

Chase Muscato, DePaul’s American Society for Public Administration student award winner, is pursuing a Master of Public Administration degree with a concentration in Public Management at the School of Public Service.

We asked him about his experience at the School of Public Service, about what he plans to do with his degree, and more.

What inspired you to enroll at SPS?
I have always valued public service. As an undergraduate History major, I learned a lot about the value and impact of effective civic service by studying public service provisions in different eras. Effective public service allows underserved people of little means to have programs and services to help better their quality of life.

After getting my undergraduate degree, I sought to best position myself to be able to enter the public sector and work for an organization that is a provider of the public services that I so greatly value.

In what ways do you feel SPS is preparing you in your career goals?
Local Government Administration (MPS 526), taught by Nick Kachiroubas, taught me the structure and functions of different bodies of local government and helped me to gain the understanding of how these government bodies interact and what challenges they face. Nick also created the final in MPS 526 to be a very real application of knowledge, requiring students, in groups, to create a policy and to pitch it in front of real city councilors, who provided feedback and voted whether to pass our proposals.

I think that the mix of theory and real world application helped me greatly in understanding the workings of local government.

Also, Government Financial Administration (MPS 514), taught by Steven Abbey, taught me how to analyze local government financial documents such as a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) using excel to better understand the fiscal health of a community.

MPS 514 also provided me with skills in Microsoft Excel.

What do you plan to do after you leave SPS?
During the course of my studies, I landed an internship as Management Intern for the Village of Volo to fulfill the internship requirement the MPA program. Well, this turned out to be a great learning experience, and as of June, I accepted a full-time position as a Management Assistant for the Village of Volo.

What SPS principles or teachings do you expect to apply to future jobs and experiences?
I have already used the Excel training I received in MPS 514, and I will continue to use it in my professional career.

Also, many of the theories and applications that I learned in Leadership and Management (MPS 521) and in Ethical Leadership (MPS 594) will be very useful as I continue to progress in my career.

I hope to one day be in a position of leadership, so learning about the challenges of leadership as well as the different types of leadership and how to continue to develop, stick to my values and be an ethical leader are very important and useful.

What would you say to a prospective SPS student?
I believe that it is extremely important to reach out and meet and get to know the people in your classes. This serves as a practice in networking, but it also will develop friendships.

Also, all of us are in or trying to get into the public sector, and often classmates will have leads for potential internships or other opportunities. My other piece of advice would be to pick your professors’ brains as much as possible! At DePaul we are lucky to have many professors who also work in the public sector, and they can offer you a wealth of information and help with topics that extend far outside the classroom.

Don’t hesitate to use your professors as sounding boards, as they are all very helpful, and in my experience, more than willing to listen and provide advice.
Welcome to the...

As always, the School of Public Service went to great heights to celebrate another academic year — throwing its End of the Year Party from a rooftop of its downtown Loop campus. The event featured the induction ceremony for the DePaul chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha, the national honor society of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration. The below photo shows, from left to right: new inductees Ashley Fisseha, Mary Castro and Cheryl Yung, faculty member and PAA advisor Adrienne Holloway, keynote speaker and SPS graduate Toyce Mizelle, and new inductee Cecilia Mendoza. Sheree Lee also was inducted. At top left, faculty member Mark Light shares a Light moment with Michelle Latka, Victoria Gajc and faculty member Joe Schwieterman. At top-center, SPS Director Bob Stokes offers remarks. At far left, faculty member Christopher Einolf congratulates Cheryl Yung. At left, Holloway welcomes the crowd. And at below-left, faculty members Pat Bombard, Ron Fernandes and Raphael Ogom congratulate Mary Castro.

Photos by Akil Buggs
A course that’s truly global

The Hay Project, a partner of the School of Public Service, has sponsored a quarterly non-credit online leadership development course since September 2010, with more than 430 participants from 20 countries completing the course to date.

These include DePaul employees, staff of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in the U.S. and Australia, Depaul International subsidiaries in the U.S. and Ukraine, Catholic sisters and priests from Kenya, and faculty and staff of the University of Sulaimani in Iraq.

The organization offers courses and events, and its website features Web resources and relevant podcasts, including one featuring director Patricia M. Bombard, chairman J. Patrick Murphy and William Hay.

The Hay project invites you to browse its website and find a resource, article or event that is useful to you or your organization.

Visit: Vincent on Leadership: The Hay Project

Authentic Conversations

Would you like the opportunity to meet and learn from Chicago’s distinguished leaders in Public Service in a welcoming, informal setting?

DePaul University’s School of Public Service offers its Authentic Conversations series to provide unique, discussion-based opportunities for students to meet and interact with distinguished leaders of public affairs, nonprofit management, and international affairs. The conversational format allows participants to learn about the guests’ leadership experience and to gain insight on how they can pursue similar career paths and build their networking skills.

Distinguished guests bring a variety of political and policy objectives over the course of the program. SPS offers the conversation series at no charge one to two times per quarter. Students must RSVP to ensure appropriate seating.

To read previous SPS newsletters, visit the School of Public Service website

Revitalization in action

The Chaddick Institute’s Municipal Design Review Network (MDRN) will host its annual “Downtown Walking Tour” from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Thursday, July 14, in the Chicago suburb of Glenview.

This traditional North Shore suburb has embarked on an ambitious plan to revitalize its downtown, including a rebuilt Metra train station, public library, repurposed Dominick’s grocery store, and riverwalk along the North Branch of the Chicago River.

Tours are led by staff from the municipality for in-depth analysis and discussion about the projects we will see.

The tour is free, with an optional lunch at a local restaurant to follow.

More information coming soon!

For info, email chaddick@depaul.edu.

Visit: The Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development

Sarah Luyengi
Contributor

Sarah Luyengi was born and raised on Chicago’s West side, and she’s the youngest of three. She completed her B.A. in English with a concentration in creative writing at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2010. In her spare time, she enjoys finding easy recipes online, reading negative book reviews on Amazon and playing with her cat.

Pete Reinwald
Newsletter editor

Pete Reinwald, a 2009 graduate of the School of Public Service, has worked as an editor for the Chicago Tribune since August 2010 and now serves as an editor on the national-foreign desk. He enjoys hiking, biking, guitar playing, travel, cultural sustainability, organic gardening, reading and various cultural, indigenous and spiritual traditions.