

Schroeder Center for Health Policy Celebrates Its 15th Anniversary

May 2018

Last month, the [Schroeder Center for Health Policy](#) at William & Mary celebrated its 15th anniversary with a series of events involving students, faculty, and staff across the campus. Since 2003, the Schroeder Center has helped engage William & Mary graduate and undergraduate students in the study of important health policy issues that affect millions of Americans, from studies on Medicare, one of the largest health insurance programs in the world, to studies dealing with the health of schoolchildren in our local Williamsburg community. The Schroeder Center was established with a gift from Mr. and Mrs. L. Clifford Schroeder, Sr. Our 15th anniversary events are described below.



WILLIAM & MARY

SCHROEDER CENTER
FOR HEALTH POLICY

Timothy Jost Brings His Health Policy Expertise to William & Mary



(Photo by Stephen Salpukas, William & Mary)

National health policy expert, [Timothy Jost](#) (JD), shared his experiences with William & Mary students and faculty throughout the day on April 12, 2018. Mr. Jost, Professor of Law, Emeritus, at the Washington and Lee University School of Law, is an expert in the fields of health law and policy and health care regulation. Mr. Jost is also a contributing editor of *Health Affairs*, which is a leading peer-reviewed journal on health care and policy and where he has posted news and analysis about the Affordable Care Act (ACA) for nearly 10 years.

Students from across William & Mary benefited from Mr. Jost's expertise during his recent visit to campus. Mr. Jost spoke to students about health care policy in an undergraduate course entitled "Introduction to Public Policy" and in a graduate/undergraduate seminar entitled "Labor Market Economics and Policy." He also spoke at a lunch attended by nearly 50 students from the William & Mary Law School.

In the afternoon, Mr. Jost gave a lecture to a campus-wide audience of nearly 70 students and faculty. His lecture focused on the connections between the ACA and the business of health care. He discussed the history of the ACA and the motivations of insurers, physicians, hospitals, and other healthcare providers in supporting or opposing its passage. Mr. Jost noted that while the ACA reduced the number of uninsured, the number was not as low as the ACA drafters had hoped, due in part to the Supreme Court's decision to make Medicaid expansion an option for states. The ACA, according to Mr. Jost, has affected all sectors of the healthcare industry. He observed that hospitals benefit from the ACA and that insurers have been profitable. As for physicians, however, Mr. Jost noted that the ACA has been a "lightning rod" for physician dissatisfaction, with concerns about paperwork and regulatory burdens. Mr. Jost noted that recent efforts to repeal the ACA ultimately failed.

Mr. Jost concluded his campus-wide lecture by noting that covering the uninsured and reducing health care costs are complicated issues. In responding to audience questions, Mr. Jost shared his own view that a single payer system is not politically possible in the United States.

The visit was sponsored by William & Mary's Schroeder Center for Health Policy, Public Policy Program, Mason School of Business MBA Healthcare Club, and the Institute of Bill of Rights Law at the William & Mary Law School.

William & Mary Shapes Health Policy



(Photo by Stephen Salpukas, William & Mary)

As part of the celebration of its 15th year, the Schroeder Center for Health Policy hosted a panel discussion of William & Mary Public Policy Program alumni who are currently working in the health policy field. The panel took place on Friday, April 13, 2018, and was attended by nearly 50 undergraduate and graduate students and faculty.

Panelists focused on their experiences in the public and private sector and provided advice to students. **Michael Cassidy** (MPP '99), President and CEO of [The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis](#), moderated the panel. The four panelists included **Carol Blackford** (MPP '95), Director of the Hospital and Ambulatory Policy Group at the [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services](#) (CMS); **Ashley Gray** (MPP '14), Director of State Affairs, Medicaid,

at the [BlueCross BlueShield Association](#); **Massey Whorley** (MPP '08), Senior Policy Advisor to Virginia [Governor Ralph Northam](#) and former Governor Terry McAuliffe, and **Joanna Young** (MPP '07), Senior Director at [Avalere Health](#).

The discussion began with panelists describing their current health policy work, which covered a wide range of activities. Blackford, for example, oversees \$270 billion in Medicare spending for a federal agency, while Whorley has focused on efforts to expand Medicaid under Virginia's current and past governors. Gray spoke about her work on legislative and regulatory efforts related to Medicaid for an association, and Young described how her work at a private consulting group prepares data-driven policy analysis. Cassidy, the moderator, shared his own experiences from managing a business that provides advice on fiscal and economic policy issues.

Panelists then spoke about their experiences in William & Mary's [Public Policy Program](#), focusing on those student activities that helped them the most in their current jobs. A common theme was the importance in understanding quantitative data and the political environment as well as participating in activities, such as the 24-48 hour policy memo and the Policy Research Seminar (PRS), which mirror panelists' responsibilities in the workplace. Among the myriad of classes offered to graduate policy students, classes in economics, political environment, administrative law, and health policy and law were mentioned as being particularly useful.

Finally, panelists offered advice to students who will begin careers following graduation. Several panelists stressed the importance of treating people with respect in the workplace even when disagreement exists on politically charged issues. Others stressed the importance of understanding the basic structures, including laws and rules, under which an employee's organization operates; staying current on the health policy issues for which an employee is responsible; knowing when to "pivot" on issues; feeling comfortable with political transitions; and being able to work effectively with political appointees as well as civil servants.

Following the panel, panelists and attendees adjourned to Tyler Commons for a networking reception.

Undergraduates Examine Healthcare Issues in Virginia



(Photo by Schroeder Center staff)

As part of its 15 year anniversary events, the Schroeder Center for Health Policy highlighted the research of seven current William & Mary undergraduate students in a poster session attended by nearly 50 faculty, staff, and students. All of the undergraduate researchers used statistical software to analyze data from Virginia's acute care hospitals and to study a health policy issue of interest to them. After completing their data analysis, the students prepared and presented posters summarizing their work. Each student poster provided a brief background of the specific health policy issue studied as well as definitions and methods used to investigate the issue, results of the analysis, and conclusions and future directions of additional research.

Poster sessions are routinely used in major academic conferences as a way to disseminate authors' work. In presenting their posters, students honed their presentation skills by engaging with others in a way that mimics workplace conversations. They gave a one to two minute "elevator talk," responded to questions and answers about their work from others, defended their research methods, and engaged with people from diverse backgrounds who may not have agreed their conclusions.

The students prepared posters on the following healthcare issues:

["Who Has Avoidable Hospitalizations and Who Pays the Cost?"](#) by Kate Archambault (Computational and Applied Mathematics and Statistics, '18) and Amelia Nell (Public Policy, '19)

["Food Deserts and Obesity and Malnutrition Hospitalizations in Virginia"](#) by Tori Reese (Applied Math-Statistics/Economics, '20) and McKinley Saunders (Economics, '19)

["Who Bears the Burden of External Injury Hospitalizations?"](#) by Yash Singh (Economics, '19) and Brittany Young (Economics, '20)

["Racial Disparities in Hospital-Acquired Infection Rates"](#) by Cara Alcorn (Public Policy, '18)

The Schroeder Center for Health Policy awarded three of these student researchers (Tori Reese, McKinley Saunders, and Brittany Young) with [fellowships](#) to continue their health policy work over the summer. For more information about the students' research and their posters, please contact



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