

# Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation ■ Spring 2010 Volume 6

# Communiqué

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The Roy and Lila Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Center fosters creative and effective government problem solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. The Ford Foundation is a founding donor of the Center.



Boats bring passengers to a Vietnamese floating market

## Vietnam: Avoiding the 'Middle Income Trap' Center's Vietnam Program Explores Country's Socioeconomic Factors to Ensure Success

At a Vietnamese floating market in Can Tho, farmers and fishermen stand in wooden boats stacked high with bright green watermelons, light yellow bananas, 25-pound bags of white rice, and fresh shrimp. It is five a.m., and vendors shout out deals above the noises of rumbling diesel engines and clucking chickens. Small children play along the banks of the Mekong River Delta, while an older man walks the family water buffalo.

The Mekong River Delta is home to over 13 provinces in southwestern Vietnam. Called the "Nine Dragon River Delta," after the Mekong's nine tributaries, the region's rich ecosystem supports much of the country's agricultural production. Vietnam is the world's second largest exporter of rice

accounting for 20 percent of the world's traded 30 million tons of rice per year<sup>1</sup>; many of these rice farms depend on the Delta region's mineral-rich silt and periodic flooding for production. "The Mekong Delta is the agricultural dynamo of the country," said Ben Wilkinson, associate director of the Center's Vietnam Program. "But it is facing a potent cocktail of environmental threats."

### Potent Environmental Threats

China, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia have plans to build large-scale hydroelectric projects and dams in different parts of the Mekong Delta. These dams threaten to disrupt the Delta's delicate ecosystem and restrict water flow during Vietnam's dry sea-

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son. With less fresh water, sea water flows up river, filtering into the soil and damaging crops. Even though the largest dams have yet to be constructed, this year's drought caused a saline intrusion of upwards of 60 miles upstream, something Vietnam Program Economist David Dapice predicts will be a common occurrence. "Drought is a foretaste of what is likely to happen regularly once all of these dams get built, especially if they divert water," he said.

Increased salinization of the region's fertile soil is also caused by a decreasing water table. With limited, if any, government oversight of water resource management, rice and fish farmers simply pump water out of their own wells and dig new wells when these run dry. Pumping out fresh water causes the ground to sink and allows salty water to further filter into the ground water creating unfriendly conditions for growing much of the nation's fruits, vegetables, and rice.

These conditions are compounded by possible future damage caused by changes to the climate. Many scientists argue that Vietnam will be one of the countries most affected by a potential sea rise. Short term irregular weather patterns, such as more frequent typhoons and dramatic flooding, could damage fishery and rice paddy ecosystems within the next five to ten years. Such diminished agricultural production along with the region's public infrastruc-

ture—insufficient in the face of damaging typhoons—could force an urban migration.

"For Vietnam, you have the prospect of millions of people having to get off the land in a relatively short period of time, and the possibility of having to invest billions in housing, roads, and other infrastructure to take into account the increase in typhoons and other issues they haven't dealt with before," said Dapice.

In addition to changes to the Vietnamese way of life, deteriorating rice production could set off a domino effect in the global economy, weakening political stability among the world's largest rice importers, primarily within Africa. According to the USDA's *2010 Rice Outlook*, over 440 million tons of rice are grown worldwide. "If you lose five to ten million tons of rice from exports, it's not catastrophic from a world view, but the global price could double or even triple," said Dapice.

Dapice recommends that the Vietnamese government take an integrated approach to the Mekong Delta's water threats by creating a water market for enforcing stricter water resource management policies and researching crop varieties that can better adapt to the longer-term effects of a changing climate.

### **Avoiding the Middle-Income Trap**

The challenges facing the Mekong region are just one issue that could hinder Vietnam's continued economic success. Over

the last 20 years, Vietnam's economy has improved: the country has tripled its per capita income and opened its economy to foreign investment while encouraging domestic private enterprise. Yet, most industry remains concentrated in low-value items such as apparel and footwear. "But the margins are wafer thin, and you don't get rich selling t-shirts and windbreakers," said Wilkinson.

Foreign investors continue to gain ground in the country—Intel and Foxconn, a Taiwanese contract manufacturing company, have set up plants. In addition, the country has been able to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as well as Official Development Assistance over the past 20 years. Once among the 50 poorest countries in the world, based on purchasing power parity (ppp), Vietnam is now considered a "middle-income country," defined by the World Bank as a country with a GDP per capita ranging from \$1000 to \$3700. But such a classification carries a new set of challenges.

Thomas Vallely, director of the Vietnam Program, explains that middle-income countries often fall into the "middle-income trap" whereby lagging institutional and political development slows fair distributional economic growth. Current rapid growth rates become unsustainable in the long term unless such countries improve governance policies and build infrastructure to support a growing economy. In Vietnam's case, relatively weak public and media engagement, corruption, and inadequate government regulation<sup>2</sup> along with poor infrastructure are strong hints of a weakening future economy. Moreover, Vietnam's growing private sector strains to compete against a powerful state sector. "The dilemma is the country still has a Jurassic state sector that continues to absorb a lion share of investment," said Wilkinson. Yet, the state sector creates few jobs and does little to support the country's economic growth.

Dapice argues that Vietnam suffers from "crony socialism," whereby powerful state enterprises unfairly win the majority of government contracts, gain easier access to cheap capital, and monopolize market share. Vietnam's shipping industry exemplifies such ingrained practices.



Rice farmer in Vietnam



Street life in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam

In 2006, Vietnam announced an ambitious plan to become one of the nation's top players in the shipbuilding industry. Huynh The Du, MPA 2010 at HKS and professor at the Fulbright School in Vietnam, evaluated this plan in a comprehensive report and concluded that the country's dearth of highly-skilled nautical engineers and relative lack of competitive advantage would handicap such lofty goals. He suggested such plans were more politically motivated rather than grounded in sound business judgment. Du's projections proved accurate: the largest state-owned shipbuilder Vinashin reported over US\$18.8 million in losses in 2009 and has completed only half its contracted building projects for the year. Plans have been further hindered by the global collapse of the already volatile shipping industry and an 18:1 debt to equity ratio.

In order to escape the middle-income trap, Wilkinson argues that Vietnam must curtail such costly state sector projects and integrate the private and state sectors. China's solution to this challenge could prove a valuable model for Vietnam: China has successfully used outside international enterprises to pressure state firms into becoming more globally competitive.

### Training Tomorrow's Skilled Workers Now

In his 2006 report, Du noted that "Vietnam's shipbuilding industry does not have the benefit of high technology emerging from its higher education system...to compete for international market share." While the country demonstrates a respect for education with a successful primary and secondary system, Wilkinson argues that Vietnamese universities are inadequate for training the next generation of highly-skilled workers.

According to the 2008 *Population Change, Labor Force, and Family Planning Survey* of Vietnam's General Statistics Office, the literacy rate of Vietnamese over the age of 15 is 93.6 percent, but the same report notes that only 1.9 percent of the population has attained a college degree. Vietnam's central government has offered substantial financial support to higher education institutions, but has made little headway in improving governance processes in these institutions.

"Many of the problems in creating a strong education system are reflective of a systemic problem that transcends education," said Wilkinson. The challenges of an inefficient state sector plagued by crony

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## Center Unveils New Website

In late March, the Ash Center launched its new website. The enhanced site now reflects the integration and program development that the Center has accomplished over the past two years. Detailed content and rich graphics and photos better illustrate the wealth of research, programming, and academic support the Center offers to advance excellence in governance and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide. Visitors can now gain an enriched understanding of the Center's core initiatives: Democratic Governance, Rajawali Foundation Institute for Asia, and Innovations in Government. Students will find this site to be a much easier to use resource for their own research and scholarship. The site includes a full listing of opportunities for funding support from research grants and summer internships across the U.S., Indonesia, and Vietnam, to the tuition support provided by the Ford Foundation Mason Fellowship and the Roy and Lila Ash Fellowship.

*Visit the new website at [www.ash.harvard.edu](http://www.ash.harvard.edu).*

## New York City Mayor Bloomberg Appoints Stephen Goldsmith as Deputy Mayor

On April 30, 2010, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced the appointment of Stephen Goldsmith, one of the nation's premier experts on innovation in government and the former mayor of Indianapolis, as deputy mayor for Operations. Deputy Mayor Goldsmith currently serves as the Center's director of the Innovations in Government Program and the Daniel Paul Professor of Government at HKS.

"In every aspect of city government, we have found innovative new ways to serve New Yorkers, and with more fiscal challenges ahead, that mission is more important than ever," said Mayor Bloomberg. "In Steve Goldsmith, we have found someone who—perhaps better than anyone else in the nation—understands the power of innovation. Lots of people talk about 'reinventing government'—Steve Goldsmith has actually done it, leading the storied turnaround of Indianapolis."

*Read more at [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov).*

## Ash Center Hosts "Neighborhood Stabilization Boot Camp" Draws Top Officials from 12 Cities and the Obama Administration



Philadelphia Mayor Nutter and Director Goldsmith



Neighborhood Stabilization Boot Camp

The neighborhood-level impacts of concentrated foreclosures can be devastating: blight, depressed property values, diminished property tax collections, and a reduction in municipal services—a negative feedback loop that repeats and worsens. In 2009 alone, foreclosures have reduced property values of nearby homes—most owned by families paying their mortgage on time—by more than \$500 billion, according to the Center for Responsible Lending.

On March 14–16, 2010, local officials from 12 of the regions hit hardest by the housing crisis met at Harvard Kennedy School to develop new strategies for stabilizing neighborhoods that are experiencing large numbers of foreclosures. The "Neighborhood Stabilization Boot Camp" was sponsored by Living Cities together with the Ash Center.

This intensive two-day session was designed to dramatically increase the speed and scale of smarter, more sustainable neighborhood stabilization by

- Helping to define new strategies that will have a material impact on targeted neighborhoods; and
- Sharing "game changing" practices that will accelerate keeping units occupied and putting property vacant units back into productive use.

"It's important that government at every level, along with the private sector and non-profit community, ramp up our collective effort to confront the foreclosure crisis head on," said U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan. "The scale of this challenge demands that we redouble our efforts to stabilize neighborhoods and restore a real sense of sustainability to our American Dream."

"Our neighborhoods are struggling to stay afloat and need help in thinking about creative solutions," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in Government Program at the Ash Center. "This event facilitated discussions about strategies and models of collaboration to support stable neighborhoods in our cities."

"Everyone, from government agencies and nonprofits to financial institutions and foundations, is frustrated by our collective inability to get stabilization efforts to scale. This Boot Camp was a direct response to that frustration," said Ben Hecht, president and CEO of Living Cities, an innovative philanthropic collaborative of 22 of the world's largest foundations and financial institutions.

The Boot Camp convened teams of government officials, nonprofits, and real estate firms from Baltimore, Chicago, Cuyahoga County (OH), Denver, Los Angeles, Michigan, Massachusetts, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Phoenix, South Florida, and the Twin Cities where promising approaches are tak-



Jayson White leading a discussion



Tom Ciano, Restore Neighborhoods LA with Doug Swoger, Los Angeles Housing Department

ing hold, along with the largest national mortgage lenders, servicers, and trustees such as Deutsche Bank, Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, and Citigroup. Senior officials from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Treasury, FHA, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac also participated.

## Professor Archon Fung Launches Participedia New Website Explores Participatory Governance

By Jessica Engelman, Ash Center

As the Ash Center's Ford Foundation Professor of Democracy and Citizenship, Archon Fung spends his time thinking about the impacts of civic participation, public deliberation, and transparency upon public and private governance. Now, he is turning research into action by actively promoting citizen participation with his new website, Participedia ([www.participedia.net](http://www.participedia.net)). Developed with Mark Warren of the University of British Columbia, Participedia's goal is nothing less than strengthening democracy with its user-generated library of examples and methods of participatory governance, public deliberation, and collaborative public action. From citizen involvement in budgeting to oversight groups that ensure better health care and social service delivery, government initiatives that encourage democratic participation demonstrate powerful results.

Launched in September 2009, Participedia uses the same wiki platform as Wikipedia to tell stories about efforts such as participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil; municipal evaluation meetings in China; and the CaliforniaSpeaks health care dialogue with citizens. Participedia's open platform allows any user to contribute or edit content. This offers researchers and practitioners a unique one-stop source for information that is normally maintained, to varying degrees, by government agencies and individual funders. In this way, Professor Fung hopes to connect theory with practice. In addition, there are articles on participatory methods, including deliberative polling, citizens' assemblies, and participatory budgeting, as well as articles about the organizations that sponsor, implement, and study participatory governance. Over time, the project directors anticipate that Participedia will garner hundreds and perhaps thousands of articles.

By employing a semantic wiki extension that enables the organization of articles into databases, Participedia becomes a much more powerful tool, allowing users to conduct comparative and trend analyses. Arti-

cles are associated with properties through simple form-based templates that authors populate. These properties include, for example, geocoded location, number of participants, sponsoring organization or government, and methods of selection, participation, and deliberation. The properties identify key contextual and design variables in order to provide comparability among cases and methods. This allows research into their strengths and limitations and enables users to identify the processes that fit particular challenges and interests.

But Participedia is not just about success stories. Failures also belong in Participedia. Failures include processes that are inappropriate for particular issues, contexts, or goals. Cases of participation that involve patron-client relationships, government attempts to co-opt opposition, or processes which are merely labeled "participatory" or "democratic" are an important part of Participedia. To know what kinds of processes

work best, it is imperative to know as much as possible about missteps, and inappropriate and ideological uses of participatory processes. Therefore, Participedia is designed to systematically collect information about the original intentions and functions of processes to distinguish which are more and less inclusive, deliberative, and effective.

Currently, Participedia's project directors are focused on generating content. One way that Professor Fung is tackling this challenge is by recruiting professors to integrate Participedia into their own curricula. By assigning students to write a Participedia entry, professors will help to expand its coverage while giving students the opportunity to methodically evaluate a participatory governance project and have their work widely disseminated.

The screenshot shows the Participedia website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'page', 'discussion', 'view source', and 'history'. The main heading is 'Welcome to Participedia', followed by 'Share / Save' and social media icons. The main content area starts with a paragraph describing Participedia as a tool for strengthening democracy based on a wiki platform. It lists three main kinds of articles: cases/experiences, methods of public deliberation, and organizations. Below this is a section titled 'Case Studies and Organizations' which includes a world map showing the locations of case studies (red pins) and organizations (green pins). The map is interactive, allowing users to click on a pin to view the article about the case or organization. The interface also includes a search bar, a glossary, and a toolbox with various utility links.

## Democracy Seminars

Spring 2010

The Democracy Seminar Series brings leading academics to the Kennedy School to speak about key issues and questions related to the research of the Democratic Governance program, one of the Center's major initiatives exploring the connections between practices of democratic governance and key social challenges around the world. This semester's weekly seminars were organized around the following research areas: democracy in former authoritarian regimes, innovations in civic participation, and immigration issues related to democracy. Spring semester seminars included

- "The Politics of Citizenship in Europe," Marc Howard, Georgetown University
- "What Happens in Legislative Debates? A Deliberative Analysis of Two Contrasting Examples," André Bächtiger, University of Bern, Switzerland
- "A Theory of State Formation and the Origins of Inequality," Carles Boix, Princeton University
- "Public Policies and Private Behaviors: Achieving Policy Goals Through the Tapping of 'Moral Resources,'" Claus Offe, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin
- "Can Immigration Policy be Both Liberal and Democratic?" Gary Freeman, University of Texas, Austin
- "Democratic Deepening in Brazil, India, and South Africa: Towards a Comparative Framework," Patrick Heller, Brown University
- "How One Authoritarian State (Germany 1871–1914) Made the Transition to Democracy—Or Did It?" Margaret Anderson, University of California, Berkeley
- "Does Women's Proportional Strength Affect Their Participation? Governing Local Forests in South Asia," Bina Agarwal, Delhi University, India
- "Small Talk, Unobtrusive Protest, and Authoritarian Withdrawal," Hank Johnston, San Diego State University
- "A Paper Trail to Citizenship," Kamal Sadiq, University of California, Irvine
- "Citizen Compliance and State Legitimacy in Rural China," Lily Tsai, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

## Innovations in Government Seminars

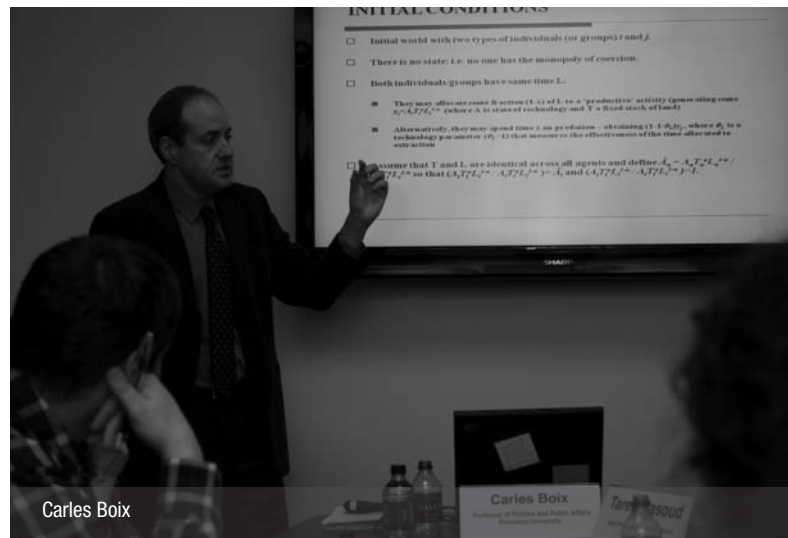
Spring 2010

Designed to inform the next generation of public practitioners, the Innovations in Government Seminar Series hosts frequent seminars throughout the academic year led by scholars and public sector innovators. Sessions address unique government initiatives—many of which are past winners of the Innovations in American Government Awards—as well as questions of replication and dissemination of such innovative practices. This semester's seminars included

- "Improving Education Through School Leadership," Jon Schnur, New Leaders for New Schools
- "Increasing Civic Participation Through Democratization of Data," Julia Bezgacheva and David Strigel, Data Feeds, Washington, D.C.



André Bächtiger and Jane Mansbridge



Carles Boix



Guy Stuart



Rafael Cestero

- “Transforming Affordable Housing Through Innovation,” Rafael Cestero and John Rhea, Acquisition Fund, New York City
- “Water Scarcity: How Technology Can Help Solve the Problem,” Richard Allen and William Kramber, Mapping Evapotranspiration, Idaho
- “Revitalizing a Community Through Education,” Higher Education Program, Kingsport, Tennessee
- “Why Replication Rarely Happens,” Robert Behn, Harvard Kennedy School

### Laboratories of Innovation: Powering Social Change in Our Cities

April 6, 2010

Failure is inevitable and important if true social change is to take place. These were the sentiments of Louisiana Lieutenant Governor Mitchell Landrieu, United Negro College Fund President and CEO Michael Lomax, White House Senior Advisor for Social Innovation Michele Jolin, and New York City Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs at the recent JFK Jr. Forum moderated by Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Center’s Innovations in Government Program. Panelists elaborated on past experiences in implementing programming, some supported by the Obama Administration’s new Social Innovation Fund, and the necessity of taking risks.



John Rhea

### Creating Collaborative Solutions: Innovations in Governance

April 12–16, 2010

The Creating Collaborative Solutions executive education program explored new methods for working across traditional jurisdictions and sectors to identify, understand, and address emerging social problems. Topics included strategic management in the public sector, adaptive leadership, principled negotiation, and public sector innovation. During this week-long session at Harvard Kennedy School, Professors John Donahue, Archon Fung, Herman “Dutch” Leonard, Mark Moore, and Center Visiting Fellow Jorrit de Jong led discussions on civic engagement and forms of governance with representatives from Tilburg University’s TiasNimbas Business School in The Netherlands.



Stephen Goldsmith, Michele Jolin, Michael Lomax, Mitchell Landrieu, and Linda Gibbs

### China’s Leaders in Development

April 19–June 15, 2010

Established in 2001, China’s Leaders in Development program is widely recognized by the Chinese government as a leading overseas training program for senior government officials. The 2010 program was launched at Tsinghua University in Beijing, China, with two weeks of lecture and policy discussion led by Chinese faculty. During the final week in China, HKS Professors Saich, Leonard, and Howitt lectured on emergency management and China’s status in the world economy. The second portion of the training program took place at HKS with four weeks of lectures led by School faculty on public management, policy reform, health care, and globalization. Throughout their visit to the U.S., senior officials participated in policy field trips to the Alticor headquarters in Grand Rapids, MI, Washington, D.C., New York City, and Boston.

## China Case Study Program Explores Emergency Management and Economic Development in China

The Ash Center recently launched the China Case Study Program to address pertinent policy areas in China and Taiwan. Taught both at Harvard Kennedy School and at the Center's partner academic institutions in China, cases are designed to educate scholars, policymakers, and the next generation of public sector leaders on best practices in emergency management, environmental regulation, health care system reform, and infrastructure development.

"These cases will be extremely valuable for courses on public policy in China by illustrating the complexity and variety of government institutional responses to rapid change," said Arnold Howitt, executive director of the Ash Center.

Cases under development include:

- **2008 Blizzards:** In 2008, Southern China experienced unusually heavy snowstorms that caused a cascading series of crises: transport by car and rail came to a halt at the peak of the Lunar New Year holiday, the country's largest spring travel season; many suffered from food and fuel shortages; and the country experienced multiple power blackouts. This case details emergency management response to the crisis.
- **Typhoon Morakot:** Typhoon Morakot struck in August of 2009, overwhelming Taiwan with over 100 inches of rain causing mudslides and the country's worst flooding in over 50 years. Many criticized the government for inadequate and slow response action. This case describes the government response.
- **China's Energy Boom:** In under a decade, China has become one of the world's top energy producers. This feat was accomplished through significant coordination with a number of central and local government actors, as well as domestic and foreign corporate entities. This case demonstrates how a seemingly top-down centralized initiative was in fact implemented through local government entrepreneurs.
- **Housing Redevelopment in Shanghai:** Shanghai authorities recently renovated an



## On the Bookshelf

Old Lane district made up of over 19,000 mixed income housing units built in the 1920s. In addition to building modern indoor plumbing where it did not already exist and enhancing security, local government officials organized civic services for the elderly and improved the streets and public spaces, fostering a renewed sense of community for the area's 60,000 residents.

- **CCTV Fire:** Ignited by fireworks celebrating the 2009 Chinese New Year, one of the buildings in the China Central Television (CCTV) complex in Beijing was completely destroyed. CCTV, China's national television network, was incomplete in its early reporting of the story. This case describes how new media was able to share news of this event with the public.
- **Reducing Air Pollution in Beijing:** As the host of the 2008 Olympic Games, Beijing welcomed over 184 million visitors from around the world. In advance of the event, the city enacted multiple measures to limit air pollution, including upgrading vehicle emission controls, building new metro lines, and enforcing driving restrictions. This case describes both the temporary and permanent transportation measures adopted to reduce air pollution.

Cases will be available at HKS and, through the HKS Case Study Program, for worldwide distribution this fall. The China Case Study Program is funded through Amway China and the Harvard China Fund.



### ***The Power of Social Innovation: How Civic Entrepreneurs Ignite Community Networks for Good***

#### **Stephen Goldsmith Examines Principles for Improving Social Service Delivery**

With deficits soaring and job losses mounting, Innovations in Government Director Stephen Goldsmith argues that now is the time to focus public and philanthropic efforts to overcome obstacles that too often seal the doors of opportunity. His new book, *The Power of Social Innovation: How Civic Entrepreneurs Ignite Community Networks for Good*, authored with Gigi Georges and Tim Glynn Burke, spotlights a new wave of civic-minded entrepreneurship sweeping the nation.

"Although government continues to invest billions of dollars in social and human services, stubborn societal problems persist," said Goldsmith. "At a time of great economic distress for the nation, we clearly need to find more effective and innovative solutions to these problems. The entire delivery system needs to be re-imagined to be more responsive to people's needs, more performance driven, and more receptive to the innovative ideas of engaged citizens."

The book is based on Goldsmith's experience as two-term mayor of Indianapolis (1995–2001) and as the chair of the Corporation for National and Community Service under Presidents Bush and Obama, a two-year executive session at Harvard Kennedy

School, and interviews with over 100 innovators representing the philanthropic, government, business, and nonprofit sectors. Featuring illustrative case studies of the catalyzing role civic leaders and entrepreneurs play in transforming social systems, the book proposes a social innovation agenda for communities that is both ambitious and grounded in practical action steps.

*The Power of Social Innovation* highlights the potential for system change within legacy organizations United Way, United Negro College Fund, and NYC Department of Education; national social entrepreneur-led organizations Teach for America, New Leaders for New Schools, College Summit, and City Year; and the less-known efforts of Acelero Learning, Family Independence Initiative, and Springfield, Ohio's Nehemiah Foundation.

*The Power of Social Innovation* offers concrete strategies for aspiring civic entrepreneurs, explaining how results-based problem solving can be applied to areas like criminal justice, homelessness and education. When innovators effectively engage with government, the book makes clear that igniting real change is possible.

## Fellows Focus

### Summer Fellows in Innovation

The Ash Center's Summer Fellowship in Innovation is designed to prepare students for careers in the public sector. Students work with some of the most creative and effective public officials and policy advisors in the country, not only to learn but to add value by sharing cutting-edge trends and ideas explored at the Kennedy School. Hosting public sector agencies are past winners of the Center's Innovations in American Government Awards or members of the Urban Policy Advisory Group comprised of the chief advisors to mayors of the 30 largest U.S. cities.

The Center selected the following students for 2010 Summer Fellows in Innovation:

- **Lindsay Berger, MPP 2011 with a concentration in social and urban policy**  
Berger will work with the Mayor of San Francisco's education advisor to identify strategies for truancy reduction.
- **Harini Angara, Harvard Graduate School of Education**  
Angara will support the city of San José Mayor's Office and the Santa Clara County Office of Education on SJ2020, a new initiative to close the achievement gap among various subpopulations of the city's K-12 students.
- **Jim Secreto, HKS MPP 2011 and Georgetown Law School**  
Secreto will assist in developing Honolulu's concept for community-based economic development as it relates to transit-oriented development.
- **Tai Steven Sunnanon, HKS MPP 2010 and Harvard Graduate School of Education Ph.D. Program**  
Sunnanon will work for New Leaders for New Schools, a 2009 Innovations winner which recruits and trains high-caliber principals to lead historically underserved and underperforming urban schools.
- **Rebecca Strauss, HKS MPP 2011 with a concentration in social and urban policy**  
Strauss will work with Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl's Department of Neighborhood Initiatives to conduct quantitative and qualitative assessments of anti-blight programs.



Students at HKS

- **Thackston Lundy, HKS MPP 2011**  
Lundy will split his time between New Orleans and Pittsburgh. In Pittsburgh, Lundy will focus on developing talent management systems to help principals address hiring needs. In New Orleans, he will provide analytical and public policy support as Mayor Landrieu transitions.

### Vietnam Program Internship

Each summer, the Vietnam Program supports students in pursuing eight-week internships at the Fulbright School (FETP) in Ho Chi Minh City. Under the guidance of FETP's full-time Vietnamese faculty, each intern selects a research topic of interest to them and relevant to FETP's research agenda. FETP arranges for the interns to meet with government officials and business people working in fields applicable to their research projects and organizes multiple policy field trips to expand their understanding of the Vietnamese economy and the socioeconomic impact of globalization. Vietnam Program Economist David Dapice also provides guidance to the interns.

The Center's Vietnam Program has selected the following students for its summer internship program:

- **Alex Ngo, MPA 2011 and MBA at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania**
- **Aubrey Huynh, Candidate to A.B. Degree in Economics, Harvard College**



*continued from page 3*

socialism arguably spill over into Vietnam’s education sector, where merit-based performance is not the norm. The World Bank-UNESCO Task Force on Higher Education and Society examined the crisis and made the following key recommendations in the 2000 report *Higher Education and Developing Countries: Peril and Promise*:

- Establish strong accreditation standards for both professors and students
- Create a culture of academic freedom and autonomy
- Enhance science and technology curricula
- Improve resources and funding supports to disadvantaged students

**The Vietnam Program**

Vietnam’s higher education sector is just one of the strategic focus areas of the Ash Center’s Vietnam Program. In January of 2008, a Vietnam Program delegation led by Thomas Vallely presented Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung with the ten-year policy framework for Vietnam’s socioeconomic development “Choosing Success: The Lessons of East and Southeast Asia and Vietnam’s Future.” This sobering assessment stated, “Key government decisions taken now and in the near future will set the country on a path that will become increasingly difficult to reverse, and will shape Vietnam’s political economy for years to come.”

To ensure that Vietnam is on the right path for sustained economic growth, Vietnam Program research, teaching, and executive training address the importance of enhancing the governance of both public and private institutions. The Program argues that curbing existing crony socialism practices in support of more merit-based production and innovation will prove invaluable for the country to thrive in the global economy. Its Vietnam Executive Leadership Program and Fulbright School are key elements to the Program’s focus on improving governance issues.

**Vietnam Executive Leadership Program**

Each year, the Program convenes the Vietnam Executive Leadership Program (VELP) which brings together senior Vietnamese leaders with Harvard faculty and global business leaders to explore the latest thinking on

globalization and its relationship to development. At last year’s session, both Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Thien Nhan and Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Nguyen Quoc Cuong participated in these discussions.

**Fulbright Economics Training Program**

The Vietnam Program also enhances education and key policy dialogue through the Fulbright Economics Teaching Program (commonly known as the Fulbright School), a partnership with the University of Economics–Ho Chi Minh City. Founded in 1994, FETP offers senior officials public policy training and the country’s first Master’s of

Public Policy for future leaders.

“Vietnam needs to develop the institutional capacity within the public sector to confront these problems of development and competitiveness, and that’s what we try to do at the Fulbright School in preparing Vietnamese civil servants for careers in the public sector,” said Wilkinson.

<sup>1</sup> *2010 Rice Outlook*, USDA, April 12, 2010  
<sup>2</sup> *Worldwide Governance Indicators Project Report*, 2008



Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Thien Nhan and his delegation



A woman boating to a market in Hoi An, Vietnam

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## In Focus: Vietnam

Surface area (sq. km) (thousands): 331.2  
Population, total (millions): 86.21  
GDP (current US\$) (billions): 90.64  
Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above): 92.5%  
Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people): 81  
Internet users (per 100 people): 24.2  
Roads, paved (% of total roads): 47.6%  
Rail lines (total route-km): 3,147



Source: 2008 World Development Indicators Database, September 2009

## Communiqué

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