GMU Launches New School

By Tonya T. Neaves

George Mason University (GMU), located in Fairfax County, Virginia, has merged its former Department of Public and International Affairs and School of Public Policy to create a new School of Policy, Government and International Affairs (SPGIA).

Building on the university’s pillars of innovation, entrepreneurship and leadership, SPGIA’s fundamental purpose is to enhance impact-driven scholarship to effectively transfer gained knowledge, skills and abilities to the public sector. SPGIA prepares its students to tackle complex public challenges across all sectors and at all levels of governance. It also supports accompanying research performed by its faculty and provides valuable insights from both resident scholars and practitioners. GMU’s location in the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area provides outstanding opportunities for students and faculty to engage with key stakeholders throughout the region, nation and world.

On December 11, in commemoration with George Mason’s birthday, SPGIA held its official launch. Other significant initiatives underway at SPGIA include new programs launched by its Centers on the Public Service (CPS), established to help public sector professionals address emerging challenges that are unprecedented in both scope and complexity. The Center plays an important role by providing executive training programs, conducting impact-driven research and promoting cross-cutting collaboration, at the local, state, national and international level. SPGIA encourages practical implementation of effective public service through education. It is the state designee for the Certified Public Manager® Program through the Centers on the Public Service.

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Founded in 1957 as a branch campus of the University of Virginia, GMU did not become an independent institution until 1972. Over the years, it has expanded to include campuses in Arlington, Prince William and Loudon Counties and a burgeoning international presence in South Korea. GMU is an academic community committed to creating a more just, free and prosperous world through research, service and teaching. As the largest public university in the state, Mason is nationally recognized for a number of academic programs, including economics, law and, more notably, public service.