

Welcome

2021 School of Public Policy and Administration *Student, Alumni and Community Recognition Awards*



Land Acknowledgement

Ahniin (Ojibwe), Weyt-k (Secwépemc), Bonjour and Hello!

Since time immemorial, we would like to acknowledge that many Indigenous Nations have lived on the land upon which York University campuses are located. York University acknowledges its students and faculty whose presence both on and off-campus is located on both ceded and unceded territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto (the meeting place) has had many caretakers, including Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat. It is now home to many First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject to the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to share and care for the Great Lakes region peaceably.

We also acknowledge the many people of African descent whose ancestors were forcibly displaced as part of the transatlantic slave trade, that live and work on ceded and unceded territory.

In accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, we will ask all attendees and participants to take a moment to reflect on their actions on Turtle Island.

Chi Miigwech, Pútucwiye (Secwépemc), Merci, Thank you



School of Public Policy and Administration

2021 Student, Alumni and Community Recognition Awards

6:30pm Land Acknowledgement – **Stephanie Anderson**,
YUSPPAAN, Director of Events and Programming

6:35pm Welcome

Marco Giancarlo, Master of Ceremonies and
2020 Alumni Recognition Award Winner

Alena Kimakova, Director, School of Public
Policy and Administration

6:40pm Foster-Greene Award for Excellence in Public Policy,
Administration & Law
2021 winner, John Riches
2020 winner, Judith D'Souza-Soares

**Presented by Professors Ian Greene and
Lorne Foster**

6:45pm Keynote Address by John Riches:
**“Lessons Learned from the Pandemic: Implications
for Policy Development and Remembering Why
Public Service is So Important”**

7:10pm Practicum Honouree

Fausto Natarelli, Adjunct Professor, School of Public Policy
and Administration

Mandeep Flora, 2021 Practicum Honouree
Alexey Togunov, 2020 Practicum Honouree

7:20pm **Student Award Presentations**

Undergraduate Student Award

Alena Kimakova, Director, School of Public Policy and
Administration

Khushbu Dhaliwal, 2021 Undergrad Student Award winner
Gurkamal Dhahan, 2020 Undergrad Student Award winner

Graduate Student Award

Naomi Couto, Director, Master of Public Policy,
Administration and Law Program

Sylvia Gajusingh, 2021 Graduate Student Award winner
Joana Jabson, 2020 Graduate Student Award winner

Best Major Research Paper Award

**Gyula Kovacs, 2021 Best Major Research Paper Award
winner**

**Alyssa Offenheim, 2020 Best Major Research Paper Award
winner**



School of Public Policy and Administration

2021 Student, Alumni and Community Recognition Awards

7:45pm

Student Award Presentations (continued)

Ian Greene Book Prize for Academic Achievement

Naomi Couto, Director, Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law Program

2021: Sarika Bhatnagar, Munir Chagpar, Meghan Ditta, Gyula Kovacs, and Cara Santoro

2020: Sara Gajic, Jennifer Lai, Jocelyn McCauley, Kyle Nimmrichter, and Alyssa Offenheim

IPAC – CAPPA Case Competition Team Award

John Wilkins, Coach and **Naomi Couto**, Director, Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law Program

2021: Eva Fok, Ranziba Nehrin, Pravina Rajadurai, Dilumi Rupasinghe and Paula Tablon-Modica

2020: Stanley Chikombero, Shriya Dangwal, Chloë Hill, Melissa Khachik and Sindiswa Moyo

High School Essay Contest: What is Your Vision for Canada?

Alena Kimakova, Director, SPPA, and

Milena Basciano, Vice- President, Public Policy and Administration Student Association (PPASA)

1. Pritika Lally - *A Longing Call to Prioritize the Safety of Indigenous Women against Violence in Canada*

2. Isabella Wossen - *Ableism: The Unspoken Social Injustice in Canada*

3. Isabella Yue - *Canada's Truth and Reconciliation*

8:20pm

Emerging Leader Award

Naomi Couto, Director, Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law Program

Jocelyn McCauley, 2021 Emerging Leader Award winner

Asare Kester-Akrofi, 2020 Emerging Leader Award winner

8:30pm

Alumni Recognition Award

Alena Kimakova, Director, School of Public Policy and Administration

Romina Chencheva, 2021 Alumni Recognition Award winner

Marco Giancarlo, 2020 Alumni Recognition Award winner

8:40pm

York University School of Public Policy and Administration Alumni Network Update

Ashley Cabral, Chair, YUSPPAAN

8:50pm

Closing Remarks

Marco Giancarlo, Master of Ceremonies

Alena Kimakova, Director, School of Public Policy and Administration

Naomi Couto, Director, Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law Program

2021 Alumni Network of the year

York University School of
Public Policy & Administration
Alumni Network (YUSPPAAN)



**It's official:
Our alumni are the best**

**Congratulations
to YUSPPAAN
on this outstanding achievement!**

Thank you for all that you do.

John Riches (MPPAL, Class of 2019)

2021 Foster-Greene Award for Excellence in Public Policy, Administration and Law

Keynote Address

**“Lessons Learned from the Pandemic:
Implications for Policy Development
and Remembering Why Public Service
is So Important”**



John Riches is an experienced paramedic service leader providing strategic guidance, coaching, and mentoring to **Region of Durham paramedics** and supervisors. As the **Deputy Chief of Regulatory Compliance & Administration**, his responsibilities include overseeing community programs, quality assurance and continuous quality improvement, regulatory compliance, adherence to privacy and access to information legislation, and risk management processes. As part of the Region of Durham's COVID-19 Pandemic Response, John led a team that implemented a Mobile Testing Team as well as a Mobile Vaccination Team to support the overall vaccine rollout. John is the lead representative for the Region on Ontario Health Team partnerships and initiatives and is also involved with the development of the legislatively mandated Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan. A lifelong learner, John completed his York University Master's Degree in Public Policy, Administration, and Law in 2019. He also holds degrees and certificates/diplomas from Western University, Ontario Tech University, Centennial College, and Durham College. In 2019, John was a **recipient of the Governor General's Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal**.

Judith D'Souza- Soares (MPPAL, Class of 2013)

2020 Foster-Greene Award for Excellence in Public Policy, Administration and Law

Keynote Address
**"What Matters Most:
Crucial Leadership Lessons the COVID-19
Pandemic Has Taught Us**



Judith D'Souza Soares currently works at the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board as a Director in charge of the Occupational Disease and Survivor Benefits Program. She leads a multi-disciplinary team of adjudicators, nurses, occupational hygienists, crisis intervention counsellors and their managers who are responsible for making entitlement decisions in all acute, chronic, and long latency disease claims and fatalities (both traumatic and disease-related). Adhering to governing policy and legislation, and identifying the necessary process improvements, while maintaining strong relationships with external stakeholders, internal partners and WSIB staff from senior leaders to front-line staff are both critical to her role and extremely important to her.

Judy holds two Masters degrees. The first is a Master in Public Policy, Administration and Law (MPPAL) from 2013 and more recently a Global Professional Master of Laws (GPLLM), which she completed in late summer 2020. In addition, she holds post-graduate certificates in Strategic Leadership, Dispute Resolution, and Project Management, as well as being a certified Law Clerk and Paralegal. Judy's interest in education, both educating herself and helping to educate others, is profound. She carried this interest to serve as the **Co-Chair of the National Education Program Committee for the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) where she also served as a National Board Member.** Social activism and the pursuit of equality, fairness, and justice, especially for women and girls, has always been at the cornerstone of Judy's community involvement which involved serving as Chair of the Board of Directors for the Women's Support Network or York Region for 6 years.

Leading with purpose and ensuring that all persons have equal access to opportunities and resources is extremely important to her as she selected career, academic and volunteer pursuits. Law-based education has not only helped raise her own awareness but also helped inform, educate and empower those around her. **She embodies "education is power" through her own fervent commitment to self-learning and teaching others both in her professional and personal life.**

Mandeep Flora
2021 Practicum Honouree



Mandeep Flora
Director, Data Strategy and Solutions Platform
Business Intelligence and Practice Division
Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and
Social Services

Alexey Togunov

2020 Practicum Honouree



Alexey Togunov is passionate about transforming public sector services to become more lean and modern, delivering greater value to users. With over 12 years experience leading modernization and process improvement initiatives for the Ontario government, he has a strong understanding of how to navigate around the challenges of delivering innovation in the public sector. In his current role as **Manager of the Project Management Office at the Ministry of the Attorney General**, Alexey is responsible for realizing the ministry's vision to bring justice services online. Previously he led improvement initiatives in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee. Before his career in government, Alexey worked in financial services supporting continuous improvement projects.

Alexey also mentors aspiring change champions, helping them realize their potential and developing capacity to deliver innovation. Alexey is an Industrial Engineering graduate from the University of Toronto specialising in Information Systems, a Project Management Professional and a Certified Six Sigma Black Belt.

Khushbu Dhaliwal (BA and CPPA, Class of 2021)

2021 Undergraduate Student Award Winner



Khushbu was a History major at York University with a keen interest in public policy. She completed our Professional Certificate in Public Policy Analysis and has been engaged with our School and student body in a variety of roles since 2017: she served as Junior Ambassador, Director of Recruitment, Vice-President and finally as President for our Public Policy and Administration Student Association (PPASA) in 2020-21 during the challenging times of remote studies and the pandemic. Khushbu has demonstrated exceptional leadership and a can-do attitude in everything that she does: re-designing our professional development workshops in support of students' internship applications, innovative and engaging events, and mentoring junior students. During her practicum placement she received an outstanding service award - the *Supporting Our Future Award* at the 5th Annual Standing Ovation Awards in the Client Services Management Branch at the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services. She is currently part of the coveted post-graduate **Ontario Internship Program as Service Delivery Intern at the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries**. Following her graduation, she answered the call to serve on the Board of YUSPPAAN. Her commitment to service excellence is both exemplary and inspirational.



Gurkamal Dhahan (BPA, Class of 2020)

2020 Undergraduate Student Award Winner

Gurkamal is a recent graduate of our Bachelor of Public Administration Specialized Honours program, Management stream, and **currently a MPPAL student and Policy Coordinator for the Town of Aurora**. In 2020-21 he completed the non-partisan Ontario Legislature Internship Programme, providing backbench Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) with staff assistance. He also worked with the Information Services branch, which focuses on the delivery of the Assembly's digital infrastructure and archival work. Gurkamal has served our Public Policy and Administration Student Association (PPASA) in a number of roles: Junior Ambassador, Director of Recruitment and in 2019-2020 as President. He has approached all these roles with a sense of responsibility, professionalism and enthusiasm. In addition to his role as PPASA President, he served as peer mentor for 1st year students to guide them through their transition to university studies, and as PASS leader for our statistics course, while also completing a practicum placement with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and a number of upper-level research-intensive courses with group work and deliverables to external partner organizations. He is a seasoned student leader and an ultimate team player, who has balanced all these roles with ease and graduated as a member of the Dean's Honour Roll.



Sylvia Gajusingh (MPPAL, Class of 2021)

2021 Graduate Student Award Winner

Sylvia Gajusingh has committed time and effort towards enhancing the experiences of her fellow students as part of GSAPPAL. This included assisting with all events as well as coordinating merchandise roll-out. Her professionalism and organizational skills were highly appreciated by her peers and the nomination letters for this award spoke to how their own participation in School events and socials was largely due to Sylvia's enthusiasm and encouragement for them to attend. Sylvia also participated in the mentorship circle program and mentored incoming and first year students. She has provided guidance and support to fellow students, improving their student experience within the program, and ultimately their academic success. In addition, Sylvia completed the personal wellness certificate and sought to enhance access to mental health services for graduate students. She embodies the Graduate Student Award through all her time and energy dedicated to her studies, her extracurricular activities and her commitment to MPPAL as a community that fosters leadership in social justice. **Sylvia works as Registry Officer at Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Refugee Protection Division.**



Joana Jabson (MPPAL, Class of 2020)

2020 Graduate Student Award Winner



Even before Joana was accepted to our Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law (MPPAL) program, she was already committed to the activities and programs of the School by attending networking events as an MPPAL candidate. Her commitment continued into her 1st year in the MPPAL program when she volunteered as a First-Year Representative for her classmates. Working alongside the Graduate Students' Association of Public Policy, Administration and Law (GSAPPAL), she represented the interests of her fellow students, but most importantly, increased engagement among the first-year students. In the 2nd year of the program, she took on the role of Vice President of GSAPPAL. Joana demonstrates passion, dedication and determination. Her commitment and willingness to work across the undergraduate and alumni associations on various projects – from graduate events to School-wide initiatives (i.e., panels, orientation sessions, medium to large sized networking events) were essential to success and creating a supportive environment for everyone. During her MPPAL studies, Joana secured two promotions – to Executive Assistant and to **Senior Program Advisor, Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of the Solicitor General**. She remains engaged as an alumna and served as Director of Events and Programming for our alumni network, YUSPPPAAN.

Gyula Kovacs (MPPAL, Class of 2021)

2021 Best Major Research Paper Award Winner



Gyula Kovacs is an experienced public policy and communications professional who works for **Ontario's Ministry of Education as a Senior Policy and Programs Advisor**. His previous roles include Issues Management and Media Relations Team Lead with Ontario's Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Communications and Media Relations Officer for Ontario's French-Language Services Commissioner, and Communications and Media Relations Coordinator for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. Gyula has also worked as a broadcast journalist in Toronto and Montréal, in both English and French. His research on ***Diversity training in the workplace: Assessing effectiveness and outcomes*** was completed under the supervision of Professor Naomi Couto and found that the evidence supports the contention that diversity training can lead to positive outcomes, but results vary depending on (i) the culture of an organization; (ii) the quality of its leadership; and (iii) the type of diversity training that is offered. Findings support the assertion that training alone will not eliminate racist attitudes and behaviours in the workplace and must be supported by additional measures to affect positive change.



Alyssa Offenheim

(MPPAL, Class of 2020 and BPA, Class of 2019)

2020 Best Major Research Paper Award Winner



Alyssa is a public sector professional with diverse experiences in provincial and municipal governments. She brings her skills in policy analysis, coordination and strategic advice to her role as **Policy Analyst at the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General**. In her spare time, Alyssa volunteers with local climate action initiatives and acts as the Director of Memberships and Partnerships for the York University School of Public Policy and Administration Alumni Network. She holds a Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law and a Bachelor of Public Administration with Honours, Management stream from York University. Her major research paper in the MPPAL program was titled ***The Impact Assessment Act, Climate Change, and Political Priorities in Canada*** and was completed under the supervision of University Professor Brenda Spotton Visano.



Ian Greene Book Prize for Academic Achievement

MPPAL Class of 2021

Sarika Bhatnagar
Munir Chagpar
Meghan Ditta
Gyula Kovacs
Cara Santoro



Ian Greene Book Prize for Academic Achievement

MPPAL Class of 2020

Sara Gajic
Jennifer Lai
Jocelyn McCauley
Kyle Nimmrichter
Alyssa Offenheim

2021 IPAC-CAPPA Case Competition Team

Andrew - Tech is talking ...



**Eva Fok
Ranziba Nehrin
Pravina Rajadurai
Dilumi Rupasinghe
Paula Tablon-Modica
and coach John Wilkins
with Executive in Residence
Rory O'Connor**

2020 IPAC-CAPPA Case Competition Team



**Stanley Chikombero
Shriya Dangwal
Chloë Hill
Melissa Khachik
Sindiswa Moyo
and coach John Wilkins**

2021

ESSAY CONTEST

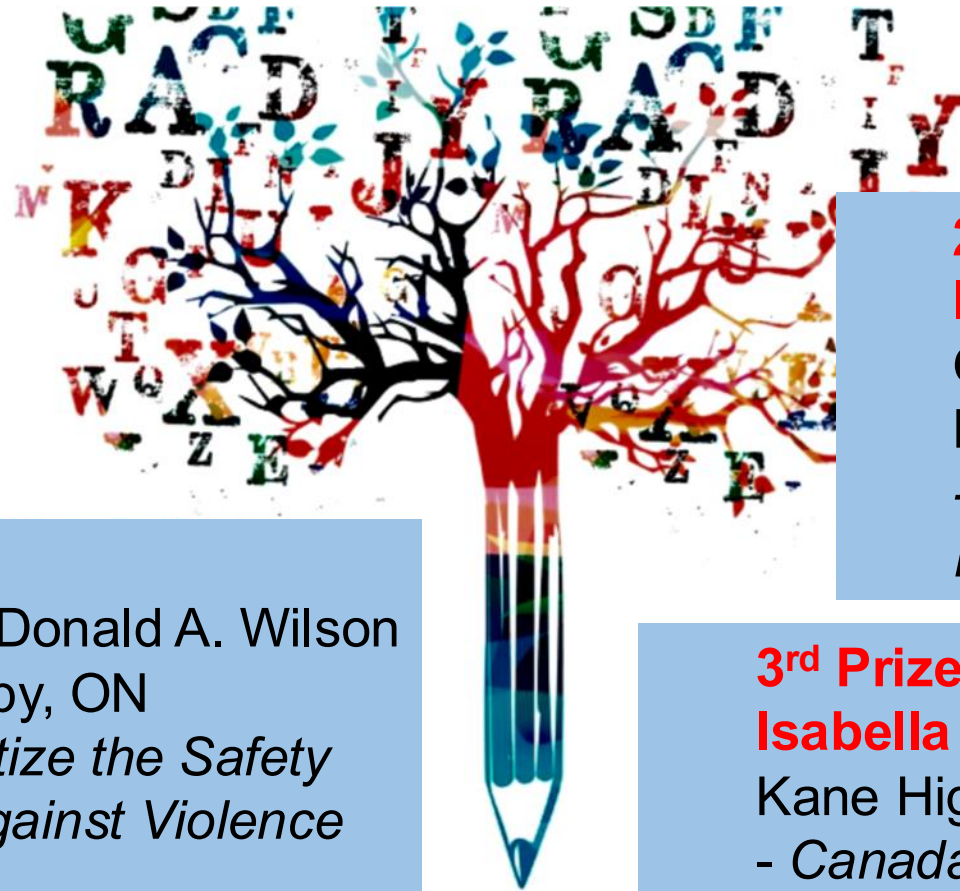
WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR CANADA?

Share your ideas about what the priorities for public policy and administration should be and how you would go about implementing them as future leaders.

Congratulations to:

1st Prize Winner

Pritika Lally, Grade 12, Donald A. Wilson Secondary School, Whitby, ON
- *A Longing Call to Prioritize the Safety of Indigenous Women against Violence in Canada*



2nd Prize Winner

Isabella Wosen, Grade 10, Omer-Deslauriers Secondary Public School, Ottawa, ON
- *Ableism: The Unspoken Social Injustice in Canada*

3rd Prize Winner

Isabella Yue, Grade 12, Paul Kane High School, St. Albert, AB
- *Canada's Truth and Reconciliation*

Jocelyn McCauley (MPPAL, Class of 2021)

2021 Emerging Leader Award Winner



Jocelyn McCauley is the **Lobbyist Registrar for the Town of Collingwood and Senior Advisor to Metrolinx's Chief Safety Officer**. She identifies and actions strategic priorities in the areas of corporate administration, team governance and operations, stakeholder management, safety and system assurances. She regularly represents Metrolinx with senior executives and management at the Ministry of Transportation, Transport Canada, and across Ontario municipalities to advance policy initiatives, intergovernmental strategies and coordinate project activities. In this role, Jocelyn works to analyze, interpret and understand legislation and policy relating to Metrolinx and manages internal and external stakeholders across a complex regulatory environment. Effective government requires dedicated and high-performing public service leaders who inspire others to do their best work for all Canadians. Jocelyn is one such individual. Throughout her career, Jocelyn has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the betterment of society. Having also worked at the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, Jocelyn has consistently upheld Canadian public sector values and ethics. Jocelyn exemplifies all the pivotal qualities crucial to this Emerging Leader Award.

Asare Kester-Akrofi (MPPAL, Class of 2020)

2020 Emerging Leader Award Winner



Asare entered the public service in 2015 after working in the private sector as a successful team lead with a strong track-record of customer service. These qualities and values are apparent in everything that he does. Towards the end of his 1st year in the MPPAL program in 2019, Asare secured a promotion to **Program Manager, Business Licensing & Regulatory Services, Municipal Licensing & Standards Division with the City of Toronto.** Balancing MPPAL studies with the supervision of a large number of staff and responsibility for major projects and modernization initiatives, Asare made it all possible. During the unfolding pandemic, he demonstrated leadership by re-focusing his work to provide administrative support to front-line workers and homeless shelters. At the same time, Asare has remained an excellent student in the MPPAL program with strong academic achievement and extensive volunteer engagement with our student and alumni associations. Asare has a long-standing relationship with United Way and has actively sought out roles in which he can provide support to the organization and its social justice objectives. He is also part of the United Way GenNext Cabinet, which encourages young people in their 20's and 30's to become involved with the organization and its fundraising campaigns.

Romina Chenchewa (MPPAL, Class of 2015) 2021 Alumni Recognition Award Winner



Romina Chenchewa has supported students and new professionals through both informal and formal mentorship opportunities. The York University School of Public Policy and Administration Alumni Network (YUSPPAAN) *Learning from Leaders* podcast series, a primary and formal channel of mentorship, is just one example of initiatives that Romina has created and led. The podcast series is a digital tool to provide advice and information about employment opportunities and key skills required for a career in public policy and administration, while showcasing the different professional journeys of alumni and leaders in the public service space. Romina's delivery of the podcast ensures that students and alumni have access to insight from inspirational leaders. Romina also mentors informally by working with the student ambassadors of YUSPPAAN. Her leadership in guiding student ambassadors fosters a growing alumni community and develops future SPPA leaders. Romina holds the position of **Assistant Credentials Assessor at University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies** and serves as **Vice-Chair of YUSPPAAN**. Romina demonstrates passion, dedication and determination in all that she does.

Marco Giancarlo (MPPAL, Class of 2015 and BA PPM, Class of 2009) **2020 Alumni Recognition Award Winner**

Marco completed both his undergraduate and graduate degrees at our School of Public Policy and Administration (SPPA) in 2009 and 2015 respectively and has been an engaged alumnus ever since. He exemplifies what it means to be part of the SPPA family, and we would not be able to provide all the supports to students and alumni without individuals like him who take the initiative to give back. He represents the heart and soul of our network of alumni due to his dedication, values and dependability. A great role model for our students and other alumni, Marco holds the position of **Regional Program Manager - Emergency Management Department of Indigenous Services Canada**. His other recent positions have been with the infrastructure and governance directorates. He has managed major capital projects - water treatment plants, bridges, roads and wastewater treatment systems - for a portfolio of First Nation communities in Ontario. Working in a governance role, he has also worked with the Indigenous Representative Organizations (IRO) of Ontario in advancing their membership needs. Marco enjoys rewarding work in high-pressure environments and is always accessible to our students.



YUSPPAAN Presentation

MEET *the YUSPPAAN team*



Ashley Cabral
CHAIR



Romina Chenchewa
VICE - CHAIR



Andrew Farah
FINANCE



Jade Williams
**MEMBERSHIP
VOLUNTEERS**



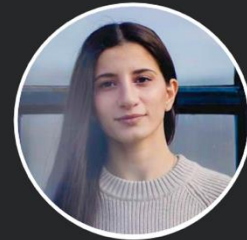
Stephanie Anderson
**EVENTS /
PROGRAMMING**



Khushbu Dhaliwal
**EVENTS /
PROGRAMMING**



Georgette Morris
PODCAST

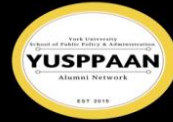


Israa Izzeddin
SOCIAL MEDIA

Meet your YUSPPAAN Team!

YUSPPAAN

York University School of Public Policy and Administration Alumni Network



UPCOMING EVENTS 2021 - 2022

LUNCH & LEARN I: HOT TOPICS IN PUBLIC POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

October 19 | 12PM | Virtual

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PUBLIC & PRIVATE INDUSTRIES

February 10 | 6PM | Virtual

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

April 11 | Virtual

LUNCH & LEARN II: HOT TOPICS IN PUBLIC POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

May 19 | 12PM | Virtual

NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE WEEK

June 12 - 18 | Virtual

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Some Upcoming Events!