ASPA ALABAMA CHAPTER MEETING
AN ONLINE DISCUSSION

September 9, 2020

Presenters:
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THE CONTEXT
OVERVIEW

● Brief examples of current challenges
● Potential solutions
● Group discussion
Fracking in OK

- Energy boom
- Earthquakes resulting from waste disposal
- Geologist scandal
- Political pressure
Challenges Facing PA

- Tension with the Politics-Admin Dichotomy
- Shifting Trust in Admin & Experts
  - Conspiracy Theories
- Failures of Government to Effectively Respond
- Staffing & Resources
Politics-Admin Dichotomy Challenges

- Increasing perception of institutions as political entities
- COVID-19 response
  - Mask wearing as political speech
- ICE/DOJ/Energy (Broadly)

![Mask-wearing in public places, by party chart](chart)

Shifting Trust in Admin & Experts

- Rise in conspiracy theories
  - COVID-19: Bill Gates/China/Election
  - Anti-vaccine
  - Flat earthers
  - Q-Anon

Bill Gates denies conspiracy theories that say he wants to use coronavirus vaccines to implant tracking devices.
Failures of Government to Effectively Respond

- COVID-19
- Wildfires & hurricanes
- Employment & housing crisis
- Budgetary contractions across levels of government
- Water crises:
  - Flint, MI
  - Jackson, MS
  - Decatur, AL
● Aging workforce
  ○ 1/3 to be eligible to retire by 2020
● Shrinking workforce
  ○ Failure to replace talent or bring in new talent
  ○ 6% of federal employees under 30
● Disconnect between society and government
● Skills gaps means functions don’t get carried out
Status Quo is the Problem

● Our current PA paradigms and public expectations are diverging and not working

● Need to rebuild/renew to prevent break down of government
WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED PROFESSIONALLY SINCE COVID-19?
WHAT SOLUTIONS HAVE YOU FOUND FOR YOUR PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGES?
WHAT’S NEXT?

- Continuation planning / Emergency preparedness
- Innovative strategic planning
- Assessing organizational success
- Staying connected, staying involved
- Adjusting research agenda - practical application
- Forward focus
THANK YOU!

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