

New Professionals Driving a New Public Service



Prepared for:
Institute of Public Administration of Canada,
National Board Members

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Background

In October 2001, a group of new professionals organized a conference entitled "New Professionals Driving a New Public Service". This event was sponsored by a number of organizations, including the Institute of Public Administration ("IPAC") and the Toronto Regional Group of IPAC.¹ The purpose of the conference was to bring together a cross-section of both new and experienced professional public servants and provide them with the opportunity to discuss issues relevant to the future of the public service.

The conference raised numerous issues, including the importance of creating a public service that attracts and supports new professionals². Since October 2001, the New Professionals Organizing Committee has met with the IPAC National Board, and IPAC has become involved in furthering the New Professionals initiative. The proceeds from the conference, presented to the Board of Directors by the New Professionals Organizing Committee, are to be held in trust and used for a program to support new professionals working in the Canadian public service. In the short-term, a new professional's plenary session has been planned for the 2002 IPAC National Conference in Halifax.

IPAC National is the logical home of the initiative due to its dedication to excellence in public service and its connections, as a national organization, to IPAC regional groups across Canada. Further, by supporting and encouraging new professionals to enter and succeed in the public sector, IPAC can advance its mission, which is to:

- Encourage the highest standards of professional practice and service to the public;
- Enhancing and understanding of the public sector;
- Advocating the values and ideals of the public service;
- Expanding and exchanging knowledge about public administration;
- Contributing to the resolution of key issues in public administration; and
- Promoting the education and professional development of public administration.

In order to continue the momentum built at the 2001 Conference, Judy Rogers, Vice President of the IPAC National Board of Directors, has initiated the development of a proposal for an IPAC program for new professionals in the public service. Between February and July 2002, a working group made up of new and experienced professionals from Vancouver and across Canada met to brainstorm ideas and do preliminary planning for an IPAC new professionals program. This report presents the ideas generated by the working group.

¹ Major sponsors included IPAC, the Toronto Regional Group of IPAC, the Federal Government, the Province of Ontario, and RBC Financial. Further support was provided by the City of Calgary, the Manitoba Civil Service Commission, the Saskatchewan Public Service Commission, and Canadian Government Executive Magazine.

² Results of the conference available on the New Professionals website: www.newpublicservice.ca

Working Groups Reports

The informal working group developed six reports to be used as a starting point in the development of an IPAC New Professionals program. In September 2002, with the sponsorship of the IPAC National Board of Directors, a formal committee will be struck to further develop the reports and put the reports into action as follows:

- **Website Working Group Report** (Page 4)
 - The report proposes a national New Professional Initiative portal that would promote the New Professionals program objective of attracting and retaining new professionals in the Canadian public service. The site's content would include resources such as a career development centre, a listserv, IPAC membership and event information, and discussion board topics of interest to new professionals.
- **Recruitment and Promotion Working Group Report** (Page 7)
 - The report outlines national and regional strategies to identify and engage new professionals, and to promote regional and national initiatives to new professionals.
- **Career Development Working Group Report** (Page 11)
 - The report outlines ideas for career development content for the New Professionals Initiative Website. Content will include articles and tips for new professionals on learning and development opportunities, secondments, and in-house training programs. Content would also include tips for managers and supervisors on recruiting and retaining new talent, resources to assist new professionals develop and plan their career, conduct self-assessments, write resumes, and develop competencies.
- **Education Working Group Report** (Page 13)
 - The working group's report outlines ideas for virtual discussion groups that would encourage new professionals to work in teams to solve problems common to the public sector such as Performance Management, Policy Analysis and Development, Leadership and Management Skills, Human Resource Management, and Service Delivery. Experienced public servants and long-time members of IPAC could be recruited from across the country to moderate the discussion.
- **Mentoring Working Group Report** (Page 15)
 - The report outlines plans for virtual mentoring programs that could be delivered through the New Professionals Initiative Website. The virtual mentoring program would provide a medium for new and experienced public servants to interact and exchange information on career development and other public sector issues using discussion boards, listservs, and a self-regulated mentor-mentee matching service.

- **Communication Strategy Working Group Report** (Page 17)
 - The report outlines the communication strategy for the New Professionals Initiative including:
 - A request for new professionals in the regions to participate in the New Professionals' Initiative Working Committee (via conference call) during June-August planning period;
 - Communication with regional groups regarding the progress of the New Professionals' Initiative Committee; and
 - Requests for feedback on work to date by national board and regional groups.

Next Steps

These reports will be presented at IPAC's Board of Directors meeting in Halifax on August 24th. With the endorsement by the IPAC Board of Directors, a formal committee of new professionals will be struck to further develop the ideas outlined in the reports and implement an IPAC New Professionals program.

Participation

The following individuals have participated in the working group meetings and reports:

Barillaro, Scott (Ottawa, Ont)
 Caverley, Natasha (Victoria, BC)
 Doylend, Colin (Vancouver, BC)
 Faraday-Smith, Nancy (Toronto, Ont)
 Giles, Cory (St.John's, NFLD)
 Grebinsky, Lisa (Vancouver, BC)
 Klukas, Andrew (Vancouver, BC)
 Linqvist, Evert (Victoria, BC)
 Matthews, Lesley (Vancouver, BC)
 Moshier, Pauline (Victoria, BC)
 Patwald, Nancy (Regina, Sask)
 Paxton Mann, Ardath (Vancouver, BC)
 Pearce, Barbara (Vancouver, BC)
 Rogers, Judy (Vancouver, BC)
 Syd Baxter (Vancouver, BC)
 Tupper, Alan (Vancouver, BC)
 Whippler, Alanna (Regina, Sask)
 Wilson, Hamish (Vancouver, BC)

Website Working Group Report

1. Overview

The New Professionals Initiative (NPI) currently lacks a Web presence. There is a site that archives the results of the first NPI Conference in October 2001; the IPAC Web-site itself does not have a section targeted towards new professionals or supporting the New Professionals Initiative.

The purpose of this document is to outline a proposal for a national NPI portal that would promote the New Professionals program objective of attracting and retaining new professionals in the Canadian public service.

2. Site Purpose

The national, bilingual portal site would provide an overall framework that would feed into regional modules. Including regional information would provide a strong, local footing to promote NPI/IPAC to current and prospective members, and serve as a career development resource.

- Key Objectives
 - Provide a venue to connect new professionals from across the country
 - Promote IPAC mission to current and prospective members
 - Forums/discussion boards to foster dialogue among new professionals
 - Career development and job searching resource. Also an educational component for students/prospective workers considering public service
 - Create avenues for mentoring – linking new professionals to experienced ones
 - Publicize IPAC/NPI events and networking opportunities
 - Site, developed, maintained and managed by new professionals

3. Site elements

- a. Career Centre [ties into Career Development Working Group Report]
 - Job postings board
 - Links to HR pages of municipal/provincial/federal govt's
 - Links to other job boards
 - Cross-promote NPI/IPAC via link exchange with other job resource sites
 - Career development
 - Information about skills training, mentoring and educational opportunities
- b. Listserv/Discussion module
 - Email newsletter digests
 - news about IPAC/NPI events
 - updates about recent postings on the site

- Web-based, threaded forums application
 - Topic-based discussions among new professionals/students. Experienced professionals also participate as discussion guides /online mentors.)

- c. Regional Activities
 - Promote community involvement: push to offline, local NPI/IPAC events. Market opportunities for networking among member and non-member groups
 - Post details for other related events (i.e. university speaker series)

- d. Information Centre
 - Web-scan of related public service stories and research
 - Link out to topics of interest on the web:
 - Management issues
 - Policy issues
 - Practitioner/in-the-field reports
 - Academic studies and research

 - Letter of the month that gives new professionals and students a spotlight for talking about their front-line career experiences
 - Archive of any 'in-house' articles of interest to new professionals and students
 - Email alerts to notify users of site updates

- e. Membership Centre
 - Page explaining benefits of IPAC membership
 - Push to online/offline registration options

- f. Other Functions
 - Bilingual content for national page
 - Domain name: either single domain name that can be used for English/French sites or registering two separate URLs that target to the French & English sites.

4. Site design

This needs some further consideration, depending on the architecture of IPAC site redesign. One option is to create a stand-alone site with its own domain, or a sub-site of IPAC's redesigned web-site, leveraging the traffic to the national site. It's possible to do both, with a unique NPI URL that redirects to the IPAC/NPI sub-site.

Either way, there needs to be a way to navigate down from the national NPI page to regional NPI groups. Site design should provide a framework for linking the regional sites within a common, consistent interface.

5. Audience

The site primarily targets (with possibility for overlap between categories):

- New professionals in the Canadian public service
- Students in public administration programs across Canada (key schools: U of Ottawa, Queen's, Carleton and UVic). Secondary targets, political science and other related fields)
- Interns at all levels of government
- Private-sector workers with cross-over interest: consultants, lawyers, academics

6. Project timeline

Deliver Web-site spec document/PowerPoint with input from regional working groups to deliver to IPAC Board of Directors meeting August, 2002

- August 2002: Presentation to IPAC Board of Directors
- September 2002: Appointments of web site steering committee members
- September-December 2002: Site design and build
- January 2003: Site launch

7. Bookmarks

IPAC: Institute of Public Administration of Canada
<http://www.ipaciapc.ca/>

IPAC Vancouver
<http://www.ipac.vancouver.bc.ca/>

New Professionals Driving a New Public Service:
October 2001 conference website
<http://www.newpublicservice.ca/>

CivicNet BC: Cooperative resource for local government in British Columbia
<http://www.civicnet.gov.bc.ca/>

CivicInfo BC: Local government information sharing
<http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/>

Canadian Virtual Policy and Administration Community
<http://archive.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/IT94/Proceedings/Campus.Infosys/vekar/vekar.html>

8. Contacts:

Hamish Wilson 604-873-7397 hamish_wilson@city.vancouver.bc.ca

Syd Baxter 604-873-7266 syd_baxter@city.vancouver.bc.ca

Recruitment & Promotion Working Group Report

1. Identify and Connect with New Professionals

a. Identify new professionals by linking with national organizations that have established connections with youth and potential new professionals.

- **National Actions:**

- Link with national organizations that have a high membership of youth such as the Canadian Student Federation to connect with individuals interested in public service.

- **Regional Actions:**

- Regional groups need to identify local universities and colleges, alumni associations, and employers that can target new professionals. Regional groups need to establish a notification system that notifies the regional group when a new professional has entered the workforce. New professionals on regional boards can act as representatives and make personal contact with new professional entering the workforce.

b. Encourage new professionals to attend IPAC events.

- **National Actions:**

- Organize networking opportunities for new professionals at IPAC National's conferences.

- **Regional Actions:**

- Market IPAC Regional events to new professionals and create opportunities at regional events for new professionals to identify and introduce themselves to IPAC members attending events.

2. Engage New Professionals

a. Organize events of interest to new professionals.

- **National Actions:**

- Increase the participation of new professionals in IPAC National's annual conferences. Organize conference sessions that are of interest to new professionals and provide financial support/subsidies to new professionals that want to attend, but financially unable to do so.

- Engage potential new professionals and public administration students at post-secondary institutions by participating in career days and making presentations to students at universities and colleges.

- **Regional Actions:**
 - Identify speakers that are of interest to new professionals and organize events of specific interest to new professionals.
 - Provide financial support to new professional to enable them to attend IPAC regional events because not all employers pay for new professionals to attend learning events.
 - Hold annual roundtables on the topic of “Making the Most of the First Three Years”. Annual roundtables on issues specific to new professionals will link new professionals with others starting careers government. A preliminary template for regional groups to use in delivering roundtables is attached as Appendix 1 (page 18).

b. Increase the number of new professional memberships in IPAC

- **National Actions:**
 - Appoint new professionals as representatives to national boards or committees and subsidize memberships for new professionals. (not limited to formal internship programs)
- **Regional Actions:**
 - Increase the representation of new professionals on regional groups. Appoint regional group member responsible for new professionals.
 - Subsidize national membership costs for one NP on regional board (perhaps this could be supported financially from national rather than national providing subsidies in general?)

c. Identify New Professional “Champions”:

- **National Actions:**
 - Encourage politicians and senior public servants to link with schools and employers.
 - Identify members of the academic community and encourage members to increase their ties with the public service communities.
 - Identify outstanding new professionals and make them ambassadors for new professionals in the public service. Create a national award or encourage new professionals to act as spokespeople for initiatives targeted at new professionals.

- **Regional Actions:**
 - Encourage politicians and senior public servants to link with schools and employers.
 - Appoint one regional group member as an academic liaison.

d. Encourage job shadowing for new professionals

- **National & Regional Actions:**
 - Encourage senior public servants to bring new professionals to events, conferences, engaging them in work to which they would not otherwise be exposed. (Obstacles – not all employers support NP attendance. E.g. Do employers have policies restricting financing attendance/memberships of NP)
 - Allow new professionals to shadow experienced public servants on Board, committees, regional groups, and conference committees.

3. Promotion Initiative

a. Promote the new professionals' initiative through a national web-site containing information targeted at new professionals.

- **National Actions:**
 - Revitalize IPAC National Web-site.
 - Develop new professionals' Web-site as described in the Web-site Working Group Report.
- **Regional Actions:**
 - Regional groups will link their website to the new professionals site.

b. Events

- **National Actions:**
 - National Conference – Circulate New Professional Initiative materials to conference participants, encourage feedback, and provide place and time for registrants to meet with new professionals.
- **Actions: Regional**
 - Request regional groups to provide NP materials to event attendees, brief announcements of IPAC activities.

c. Media relations campaign

- **National & Regional Actions:**
 - Issue a news release once the new professionals strategies are finalized.
 - Encourage media interviews with new professionals at the National Conference
 - Profile new professionals on the web-site

d. Print Publications

- **National Action:**
 - Make Public Management available to students of public administration, business – e.g. Orientation packages
- **Regional Action:**
 - Provide copies of publications to regional groups for distribution to new professionals who attend events and demonstrate interest in IPAC

e. Take advantage of existing events

- **National & Regional Actions:**
 - Broaden Public Service Week
 - Academic opportunities (message boards, career days)

Career Development Working Group Report

The New Professionals Web site is an opportunity to promote interest in the public sector among those who may or may not have considered pursuing a career in the public service. The following are ways in which the work of IPAC and the public service can be presented to current and future new professionals:

- Post articles on mainstream Canadian job positing Web sites such as Monster Board, Campus Work Link, Charity Village, Career Builder, HotJobs, and Workopolis.ca to promote the public service as a viable employment option. Articles and tips can originate from interviews with various public sector HR depts.
- Ensure that the articles have links to the IPAC National site and the New Professionals Initiative Web site.
- Target campus publications and trade journals for writing articles and guiding people to the IPAC organization and Web site.
- Invite public organizations to share portions of their Intranet or Web site with IPAC members on the IPAC site, which may entice people to join IPAC.

Articles posted on the career pages of the Web site, on other job boards, in campus newsletters, and trade magazines can address the following questions and issues for readers:

1. Why consider the public sector over other paths?

- The changing face of the public sector – increased demand for partnering, new ways of doing things...
- Succession needs, recruitment hot-spots
- Learning & development opportunities – fast-tracking programs underway in the federal government, applying for secondments, in-house training programs....

2. Tips for Managers & Supervisors

a. Ways of Recruiting New Talent

- Establishing contacts with university departments to present needs, meet with classes of graduating students, and 'sell' the public service. (Business Dept., Public Administration Dept., Engineering Dept., etc.)
- Striving for 'fresh' job postings
- Posting on-line

b. Ways of Keeping New Talent

- Creating and using the ESSENTIAL employee orientation program
- Holding performance reviews
- Exposing new professionals to the challenges, issues, & priorities in the organization

- Establishing mentoring opportunities

3. Tips for New Professionals

a. Getting in the Door

What various HR departments in the public sector say about qualities and competencies being sought

b. Becoming a Value-Added Employee

- Being a life-long learner
- Finding a mentor – learn the organizational culture, ‘ropes’
- Getting involved – on committees, in large projects, in new projects
- Getting maximum value from HR: finding out what training & development resources are open to you
- Talking to your supervisor/manager re: performance reviews, training & development, ideas, career interests

4. Resources

a. Books & articles & other links for career development. Topics can include:

- Developing a career plan
- Creating a personal learning & development plan
- Self-assessment tools
- Tips for resume writing and interview preparation
- Resources for developing competencies

Education Working Group Report

In a majority of cases, public service organizations recruit new professionals with advanced levels of education (i.e., MA in Economics, MPA, MBA, LLB, PhD, CA, CMA etc.). However, since most introductory positions in the public service are constrained through a combination of hierarchy, limited job design, and collective agreements, many new professionals do not get the opportunity to apply the full range of their skills. Nor do they always get to work on projects that appeal to their desire to make a difference.

This runs contrary to the very arguments, based on the variety of work in the public service is, most organizations are using to attract new professionals. More importantly, new professionals get caught in a situation where they are not challenged by the work they do and become de-motivated about working in the public service.

1. Opportunity of the Month

Use discussion forums to create “Problems (Opportunities) of the Month” and encourage the creation of virtual teams to address key issues facing the public service at all levels. General topics include, but are not limited to:

- Performance Management
- Human Resources Management
- Policy Analysis and Development
- Leadership and Management Skills
- Service Delivery

Each one of the above headings could spawn several discussion groups and research teams. Ideally, IPAC members from across the country would be invited to moderate topics that are related to their field of expertise. Research teams will have their materials published on the web site with the chance of being included in an IPAC publication. The possibility of publication would serve as an incentive for new professionals to dedicate time to working in teams on issues they may not get to deal with in their day-to-day work lives. However, IPAC may want to assign certain criteria to the adjudication (i.e., teams must represent at least two levels of government; teams must represent four provinces/territories).

In addition, any IPAC member would be free to post an issue or problem on the Web-site in the un-moderated section. This section would be more of discussion forum, but would still enable new professionals to deal with issues they normally wouldn't see and give experienced professionals the chance to get new perspectives they wouldn't get under normal circumstances. This would also serve as an impromptu networking service that may help in new professional career development.

2. Summary of Advantages

- Enable new professionals to work on meaningful projects.
- Expose new professionals to issues and problems they would not necessarily deal with under normal circumstances.
- Encourage cross-boundary and inter-governmental cooperation on virtual policy projects.
- Provide new professionals with the opportunity to get published in IPAC publications (under certain circumstances).
- Provide valuable project experience that can be added to a resume under the auspices of IPAC.
- Provide experienced professionals with a source of new thinking from outside of their organizations.

3. Best Practices

There are several issues that affect new professionals in the workplace. In many cases, public service organizations have attempted to address them. However, feedback from NPs suggests that there are problems with the approaches used by employers.

It has been suggested that the NPI web site have sections dedicated to best practices in fields related to NPs. The idea would be to solicit feedback and ideas from new professionals, present this information on the site and enable NPs that are currently employed with a way to measure their situation against an ideal. Ideally, this information would be adopted by employers as a way to improve retention of NPs in their organizations. There are a variety of issues that could make use of this approach but it has been suggested that it be applied to development programs first.

Mentoring Working Group Report

1. VISION:

• **Mentoring Program**

- New and experienced public servants can interact and exchange information on career development and other public sector issues using discussion boards, list serves, etc;
- Potential mentors and mentees can meet through a self-regulated mentor-mentee matching system; and
- Regional IPAC chapters can obtain information and resources to start a local mentoring program that meets the specific needs of the region's membership.

2. WEB-BASED MENTORING:

• **Discussion Board**

- A web-based discussion board could be designed where individuals participate in discussions on a variety of topics and areas of career interest. The discussion board would be a place where new and experienced public servants could come together to exchange information and obtain advice on career paths and professional development.

For example, IPAC could have a discussion board for people interested in Human Resource Management. IPAC could recruit public servants with expertise in the Human Resources field to moderate the discussion and provide advice to new public servants wanting to pursue a career in Human Resources. The discussions could range from new trends in Human Resource Management to providing advice on career development and advancement.

• **Mentor/Mentee Matching Service**

- For individuals who prefer a more one-on-one traditional mentoring relationship, a web-based matching service could be designed where mentors and mentees meet on-line. A web based matching service would allow interested individuals to post their profile and advertise themselves as a mentor seeking a mentee or vice versa. The matching service would provide guidelines, tips, and articles for mentors and mentees, but once a mentor and mentee connect it would be their responsibility to manage the relationship.

The benefit of a national mentor-mentee matching service is that mentors and mentees could connect with people from different parts of the country or people working at different levels of government. Mentors and mentees can communicate via e-mail and telephone as often as they wish.

3. WEB-BASED RESOURCE CENTRE

- **Mentoring Program Resource Centre**
 - The IPAC mentoring website could also provide an on-line mentoring resource centre for local IPAC chapters that provides articles, resources, best practices, contacts and guides to assist local chapters plan and implement mentoring programs in the region.

Regional Communications Strategy Working Group Report

For start-up phase of New Professionals Initiative

- Request for NP regional participation in NP working committee (via conference call) during June-August planning period (see email below)
- Communicate with regional groups as to initial steps taken by NP committee, six working groups & action plans to date
- Invite feedback on work to date by national board & regional groups

To: IPAC Regional Groups

Subject: Opportunity for involvement in New Professionals Initiative

Regional Groups:

I would like to extend an invitation to IPAC regional groups to participate in an initiative began last year by a group of new professionals from across Canada. This group organized the New Professionals Conference in Toronto, October 2001.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of IPAC, I am facilitating the development of an IPAC program aimed at new professionals that will build on this great beginning. To do this, a group of new professionals from Vancouver has come together to generate some next steps, and would like to extend an invitation to all regional groups to identify new professionals from your area who might be interested in participating. I'd like to note that we have purposely not defined who a "new professional" is, but would rather allow people to self-define.

Further participation of the regional groups is critical to the success of this initiative. If regional groups have connections with new professionals (which some regional groups have already done), or if activities have been held or planned for new professionals, please send any information to the contact below. In addition, materials generated by the new professionals working group will be circulated to all regional groups later this summer, and we will be asking for your feedback.

Our next meeting is Monday June 24, 4.30-6 pm PST. Please contact Barbara Pearce (information below) if you have a representative who would like to participate in this meeting, or future meetings, via conference call.

Barbara Pearce

A/Director, Information & Administrative Services, City of Vancouver

(604) 871.6125

barbara_pearce@city.vancouver.bc.ca

Regards,
Judy Rogers

New Professionals Roundtables

As an initiative of the IPAC New Professionals Program, we would like to extend an invitation for the IPAC Regional Groups to join in a cross-country effort to organize and host – in each group’s own region - an exciting roundtable aimed at **new public servants**, entitled:



Why? The roundtables are intended to build on the success of last year’s *New Professionals Driving a New Public Service* conference, and be included as part of IPAC’s New Professionals Initiative. They also recognize that, while recruitment of new public servants is well in hand in most jurisdictions, retention of new professionals beyond 3-5 years remains especially problematic.

What?

The roundtables would focus on how new public servants can make the most of their first years in government. The theme would emphasize that both the organization, and the new public servants themselves, are responsible for making those first years a valuable working, learning and developmental experience.

A small mix of new and experienced public servants –ideally from different levels of government - could be engaged to make brief presentations about how they made the most of their early years, followed by a significant amount of time devoted to roundtable discussions among participants.

We would like to work with regional groups to identify 3-4 common issues for roundtable discussion, so that the results and recommendations can be compared across regions and summarized in a concluding report.

We’d like to suggest that a modest registration cost (\$15-\$20) be charged to participants. In addition, for those regional groups able to secure an adequate facility, we would also suggest that the roundtables take place in the late afternoon, followed by an informal wine and cheese reception afterwards.

Who?

New public servants are typically a self-selecting group. Nevertheless, generally speaking, the roundtables would target public servants from all levels of government with less than three years experience.

When?

On or around the anniversary of the New Professionals Driving a New Public Service Conference, which was held October 22-23, 2001. For example, the Toronto Regional Group has booked October 23rd as the day to host the roundtable in the GTA. While it would be nice if participating Regional Groups could hold the roundtables more or less at the same time, we recognize that each group will have different organizational needs and availability of facilities and roundtable dates in November may be necessary.

What Next?

Interested regional groups are requested to RSVP to Judy Rogers by September 30, 2002.

Depending on the availability of meeting space in your area, participating regional groups may want to consider booking a facility as soon as possible, based on estimated attendance, or capped registration.

Working with regional groups, we plan to develop a toolkit to help in the organization of local roundtables (including common discussion topics and a shared evaluation form). We are also exploring the possibility that the roundtables be cost-shared by IPAC National (to a certain maximum for each regional group).

We hope that regional groups share in our enthusiasm for this exciting, ambitious initiative. Your participation will ensure a truly cross-country event geared towards new public servants. By doing so, you will give a voice to new public servants interested in helping solve the retention issue and hoping making the most of those first few years in public service.