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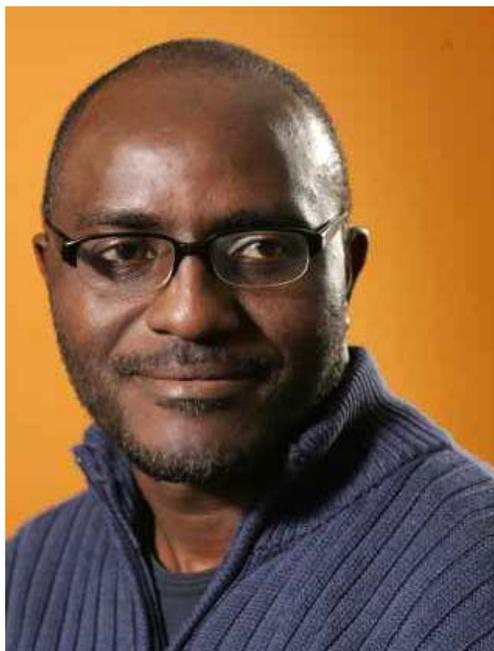
# The PPA *liticus*

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RYERSON POLITICS AND  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ALUMNI

## Life as a Scholar *Engagé*: GRACE-EDWARD GALABUZI

It is easy to assume that the work of an academic ends with the submission of the final marks in the spring, but last May I was not feeling the joy of the down time. With research beckoning (two SSHRC-funded Community University Research Alliance projects: the *Anti-Poverty and Community Organizing and Learning Project* and the *Precarious Employment and Poverty in Southern Ontario Project*) as well as an HRSDC-funded project on *Social Inclusion/Exclusion* and a three phase/four year study looking at *Income Security, Race and Health in the North West Toronto neighbourhood of Black Creek*, the Spring was not going to be a rest period. Like other professors at Ryerson I am professionally bound to balance “scholarly activity” with “service” and “community engagement.” This year just like any other!

I had other research plans in the works. I spent several months of my sabbatical in 2010 in Southern Africa researching the harmonization of mining policy in the SADC region. My search for documentation led me through South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and Tanzania. This trip was part of a personal quest to update my research on the international political economy of mining I had done for my dissertation some years ago, before I switched my focus on Canadian politics and policy issues. This would



Dr. Grace-Edward Galabuzi

be a great opportunity to revitalize the project and hammer it into a book. I was also hoping for a quiet re-entry into the classroom in 2011. I found my ambitions to complete this work also challenged by opportunities to contribute to Ryerson University (through the Department Appointments Committee, multiple Faculty Promotion Committees and various other activities) and the broader community.

I sit on a number of community boards such as the Atkinson Charitable Foundation, the United Way of Toronto, the Ca-

nadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Board and the Stephen Lewis Foundation. On campus, I chaired a Taskforce on Anti-Racism at Ryerson during part of my sabbatical and upon my return, I worked with some of our students on various projects, forums and political actions. A highlight for me was the POG Student Union debate with Liberal Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette on her “Governance of Canadian Businesses Emergency Bill.” Her proposal, in short, called for companies that benefit from Canadian taxpayer bailouts be subject to tightened Canadian ownership rules – a position hard for a good lefty to disavow. However, my own research in mining suggested to me that Canadian companies have not been, simply by virtue of their “domicile identity,” paragons of corporate social responsibility. My position was that her bill had to be amended so businesses can also be held accountable for generating community value, not just corporate value.

The anti-poverty agenda also claimed a good chunk of my time as I sought to clarify the concept of racialization of poverty and its policy implications. Among other activists, I was invited to present at the City of Toronto Anti-Poverty Symposium along with Ontario Child and Youth Minister Laurel Breton and Senator Art Eggleton, who has recently authored a Senate Report (See page 2)

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on Canadian Anti-Poverty Strategy. I also served on the Minister's Social Assistance Review Advisory Council that drew up the terms of reference for the current Ontario Social Assistance Review Commission.

My year showed me why the boundaries of academic production and community engagement are hard to maintain. Along with completing a peer-reviewed journal article and three book chapters, I was asked to present to the Ottawa Metropolis Series on the Social Determinants of Health. I gave a paper on "Income Security, Race and Health: The Racialization of Poverty and Health Inequities." While in Ottawa, I also addressed the Federal Government's Racism Free Workplace Strategy Group on progress on employment equity. I was back in Ottawa a few weeks later to address the annual conference of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and gave a paper on building inclusive post secondary institutions. On it went through winter and spring.

In February, I presented a progress report on the Anti-Poverty and Community Organizing and Learning Project at the University of Toronto's Urban Studies Centre. On March 21, to mark the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Sheila Block and I released *Canada's Colour Coded Labour Market: The gap for racialized workers* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative/Wellesley Institute) at Ryerson University. In April, I worked with the Ontario Provincial Children's Advocate's Office as an Expert Witness on the Diane Anderson Inquest. I then presented at the Employment equity Town hall at Ryerson University, and at the Inner City Health Strategy Network Policy Summit. I gave a talk entitled: "Enhancing employment prospects as a pathway to reducing health inequalities and improving health outcomes for racialized group members." I also drew media duty as a founding member of the Africentric Alternative School (as an outside-the-box approach to addressing challenges Black youth face in the school system).

In May, I was the keynote speaker at the Jamaican Canadian Association Annual General Meeting. From there, I traveled to Vancouver to address the Canadian Labour Congress Annual Convention on labour's role in dealing with precarious employment. Back at Ryerson, I participated in an animated election post-mortem discussion at Ryerson titled "Beyond the Ballot Box" organized by the Sam Gindin Chair and ended the month in Jane Finch at the Three Cities Forum sharing the stage with U of T Professor David Hulchanski discussing his report on

*Toronto's Third City* and our *Canada's Colour Coded Labour Market Study*.

Academic life offers a wide range of opportunities in any given year, and the re-entry after a sabbatical showed it can sometimes be very demanding. But at the same time it is highly rewarding as it allows us to integrate approaches to teaching, research and service to the institution and community. ♣

### Taking on Graduate School Mid-Career

**M. BURKE CHRISTIAN (BA, RYERSON, 2010;  
MSC, LSE, 2011)**

When I started in the Ontario Public Service eleven years ago I made a commitment to myself: I said that within ten years I would finish a second degree in public administration and pursue graduate work overseas.

That was a big commitment to make, both personally and financially, especially after choosing to do graduate work at the London School of Economics. Pursuing graduate work overseas was an expensive proposition. Between tuition, accommodation and living expenses, I spent close to \$50,000. The actual cost was much higher, because I took a leave of absence from my job, gave up my salary and moved across the ocean to London without a personal network in place. For a risk-averse civil servant, those were significant challenges to overcome.

However, as I write this article from my office overlooking downtown Toronto, I have fulfilled a dream: I am not only a proud holder of a degree in Public Administration from Ryerson University, but a Masters of Science in Politics and Communication from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). In addition, I have caught the academic bug and I am in the process of completing applications to pursue a Ph.D.

The question is: was it worth it – the work, the investment and the strain on family?

The simple answer is "Yes!" It was the best investment in myself I could possibly make and I have benefited both professionally and personally. My degree allowed me to secure a

promotion within a few weeks of returning to work – something that otherwise may not have happened.

Most importantly, though, I gained perspective. At Ryerson, classes often discussed the global nature of politics and the changing nature of democracy. That's all very well when you are sitting in Toronto and your life experience has been framed primarily in a Canadian context. My perspective changed when I went to LSE. For the first time I was sitting in classrooms where 90% of the students were from other parts of the world. LSE is an international school and to find a British-born student there is like finding a rare bird. This gives an individual a lot of different insights into the human condition, learning from students who are living in developing countries or under non-democratic rule. It forces a conversation, at times uncomfortable, about diversity and the differences between the global south and the relatively comfortable lifestyle of western democracies. These discussions are leading me to ask better questions about inclusion and accessibility as I consider policy questions in Ontario.

Secondly, there is the advantage of a global network. Counsellors and mentors tell people that finding good employment opportunities and climbing the political ladder is all about who you know. If one accepts this premise as true, then studying overseas is an obvious benefit. I am now connected with people across the globe and in varying fields. I have friends working for government agencies like the United Nations and the European Commission, as well as for corporate entities like Philip Morris. My aim is to continue to network with them and keep abreast of what new policy methods are put to work around the world.

Thirdly, the whole learning experience was different. As a student at LSE you are able to work with some talented academics from across disciplines under a system of self-directed learning. The British model of graduate study is intense and makes students take responsibility for their own learning. Exams for *both* terms were written in May and worth 100% of the final grade. Students did not have access to instructors between terms, forcing us to be disciplined and rigorous in our studies. The British model of graduate studies is all about the argument: Take a position and be prepared to defend it critically and rationally.

Pursuing a graduate degree in media and communications gave me an opportunity to explore the social sciences in a multi-dimensional fashion. Looking at questions of sociol-



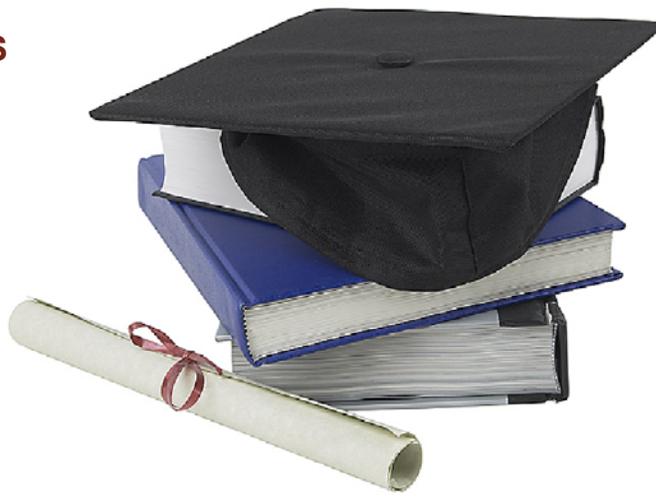
*M. Burke Christian*

ogy, political science (even history) through media and communications, I quickly came to the conclusion that it is impossible to look at anything today without considering media or communication practices. In fact, I would argue that the biggest gap in our understanding of political science is around media and communications. I would encourage the department at Ryerson to consider developing a course in political communication. It would be of great benefit to students and future generations of civil servants.

Beyond the academy, living in London was a marvellous experience. It feels very different to spend time in the markets, walking to and from school and spending time amongst Londoners in their own environment. It gives you a much better understanding of your own city and what needs to be improved. Canadians are spoiled with space and less dense population centres. After being in London, the TTC feels like the most spacious place in the world – and that is during rush hour! London is also the gateway to the continent and within a short period of time you can be in midst of the cultural and historical centres of Europe.

Graduate school is a smart investment and I would suggest that students consider an international experience. It will enrich your life both personally and professionally and will provide you with a lens on politics and policy that is second to none. In the end I can simply say that my year in London and my Masters from the LSE was worth every single penny and that I look at my newly framed degree with a great sense of pride and achievement. ♣

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2011 GRADUANDS!



**B.A (PPA)**  
Haider Bahadur  
Diana Fordjour-Acheampong  
Pearl G. Glasgow  
Nusrat Islam  
Angelina R. Mason  
Lindsay Renner  
Alma Sultafa  
Pavlina Zelcevic  
Frank Carlisle  
Craig Dart  
Timothy James Lockett-Smith  
Lori Jane McDonald  
Ryan Nagelmakers  
Sherry Lynn Maracle-Reeve

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Lisa Gold  
Robert Alexander Ibrahim  
Iris Martinez  
Lara Bobbie Ruplen  
Jennifer Abbott  
Lesley Christine Hill  
Lauri Dawn Williamson  
Mike Sullivan  
Jennifer Susanne French  
Catherine Yuen-Han Ng  
Charlene Tehkumamah  
Kent Mortson  
Jon Pannunzio  
Paul Ryenolds

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Kadian Gifford  
Guhad Hersi  
Lydia Irutingabo  
Sharon J.M. Murray  
Saradoula Nikitas  
Jeremy Tse  
Sindiso Zemura  
Frank Biancucci  
J.David Finch  
Lori Ann Hamer  
Melanie Grayce Jones Babcock  
Jeremy Parkin  
Edward Ruitter  
Mike Sullivan  
Nicole Barrafato  
Elizabeth Kim  
Maria Knyazeva  
Danny Palma  
Shantell Perry  
Ralph Schmidt  
Allan Young

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Carrie Bloxsidge  
Christopher Carriere  
Jessica Colantonio  
Isaac Coplan  
Shane Christopher Foran  
Brittney Brownell Gellately  
Jason Grossman  
Dawit Hailu  
Anisha Henry  
Sarah Jane Hernandez  
Katlyn Dawn Houghton  
Ayadi Ibrahim  
Thomas Kais-Prial  
Jakub Jaroslaw Kardynal  
Ian James Hammilton Kellar  
Salmaan Abdul Hamid Khan  
Vishal Lall  
Victor Joseph LaPierre  
Malte Christian Leuchten  
Bojanna Lough  
Tiffany MacEachern  
Michelle McDavid  
Colton Moore  
Alexander Andrew Nicolaidis  
Teasmiea Rahman  
Darius Sookram  
Eduard Sopko  
Janko Stanekovic  
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Iram Imtiaz  
Pamela Jewell  
Adrienne MacDonald  
Kristina Niedra  
John Allan O'Hagan  
Daniel Papaconstantinou  
Byoungjun Park  
Murielle Daphnee Peyer  
Jennifer Querney  
Zuhail Rahim  
Dany Savard  
Steven Venner  
Victoria Walker-Dawson  
Adela Wan  
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Kyle Wilmott  
Bryce Workman  
Justin Andrew Zelasko

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