Meet the newest addition to our team!

Debbie Koreski – Director of State Government Relations

Debbie is the newest member of our staff and comes to PSU from the Oregon Legislature. Since 2003, she has worked for the Oregon House of Representatives as a Legislative Assistant, Legislative Director, and Chief of Staff to the Speaker of the House. Debbie has played a vital role in the passage of several pieces of major legislation, including: Oregon’s Renewal Energy Portfolio, the Jobs and Transportation Act, Oregon’s Rainy Day Fund, and the Oregon Family Fairness Act.

Debbie grew up in Memphis, Tennessee and earned her B.A. in History from Mississippi State University. She moved to Oregon in 1999 and has also worked for US Congresswoman Darlene Hooley and on several ballot initiative and candidate campaigns. She looks forward to applying her experience to serve the PSU community during the upcoming legislative sessions.

Debbie currently lives in a very crowded and loving home in Salem. Her family includes husband Bob, one-year-old daughter Annalee, four-year-old son Bo, canine daughters Daphne Marie and Lula Belle, and grandparents Sue and Ken. Welcome to the team, Debbie!

What do we do?

We are the liaison between the university and local, state, and national governments and agencies. In addition, Government Relations helps builds governmental support for the university and identifies opportunities for faculty and staff to contribute to the public policy process.

We are charged to support and promote the President’s five themes, they include:

- Provide Civic Leadership Through Partnerships
- Improve Student Success
- Achieve Global Excellence
- Enhance Educational Opportunity
- Expand Resources and Improve Effectiveness

General questions? Contact Rachel Martinez at rmart@pdx.edu
2012 Legislative Priorities:

1 – **OUS Funding:**
With the current 2011/12 revenue shortfall, it is unlikely that we will receive the 3.5% “holdback” from the 2011 session appropriation. It is also possible that OUS will be asked to take additional cuts on top of the “holdback” to account for the current revenue shortfall or any additional shortfall from the February 8th revenue forecast. PSU must let legislators know the tremendous impact of these cuts to PSU students, research, and programs.

2 – **Oregon Sustainability Center:**
Currently, the bonding of OSC faces significant challenges to winning legislative approval. PSU must effectively educate legislators about the benefits of the OSC in terms of increased classroom space, job creation, and research. PSU will also be responsible for providing answers to important questions from the 2011 OSC budget note.

3 – **PSU Day at the Capital:**
PSU Stakeholders (alumni, PSU Foundation members, faculty, staff, and students) will converge on the capital on Wednesday, February 8th to advocate on behalf of issues that are important to the University. This is the first annual session for the Oregon Legislature so let’s make a big impression! If you are interested in joining or have questions please contact Ari at awubbold@pdx.edu.

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**Event Update**

**WHO:** 30-60 PSU Stakeholders.  
**WHAT:** PSU Day at the Capital.  
**WHERE:** Salem, Oregon.  
**WHEN:** Wed, February 8th, 8:00 am-4:00pm.  
**WHY:** Fight on behalf of PSU and the issues that are important to you!
Federal Relations Update

Defense Postpones MOU Requirement:

In 2010 Congress awarded $542 million to active-duty service members through the Tuition Assistance Program. The U.S. Department of Defense issued a memorandum in March 2011 stating that colleges participating in the Tuition Assistance Program must follow guidelines written by the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges, a consortium of colleges that cater to veterans and members of the military. Those guidelines include a 25% cap on residency requirements, as well as rules governing transfer of credit, placement by exam, and prior-learning credit.

The higher education community has been watching this proposed requirement closely with concern. However, the Defense Department has agreed to postpone its January 1 deadline for institutions for a 90-day extension. This will give the higher education and veteran community more time to work with the department on changes to the MOU. PSU will continue working with other OUS institutions to provide feedback to DoD.

Congratulations to OTREC:

PSU was recently awarded a $3.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to continue work at the federally recognized University Transportation Center, the Oregon Transportation Research Education Consortium (OTREC) – a partnership between PSU, the University of Oregon, and the Oregon Institute of Technology. The University of Utah is also a partner university. The grant-funded research and educational programs will focus on:

- Improving health and safety.
- Increasing the efficiency and understanding of cycling, walking and transit.
- Making the best use of data, performance measures and analytical tools.
- Integrating transportation and land-use planning.
- Taking long-term action on transportation emissions and climate change.

Portland State was one of 22 grant recipients out of 63 applications received by DOT. The grant competition challenged university transportation center leaders to demonstrate the ability and experience to produce the country’s best transportation research and educational programs. “In five years, OTREC has advanced the state of research on topics such as the connections between transportation and land use; intelligent transportation systems; and bicycle, pedestrian and transit infrastructure,” said OTREC Director Jennifer Dill. “This award recognizes that work while allowing us to focus deeper on pressing national problems.”

Mary Rae Moller - Director of Local and Federal Government Relations

Mary is a graduate of Portland State University where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Community Development in 2002. During her time at PSU she was proud to serve as student body President and was often involved with advocating for higher education in Salem and in our nation’s capital.

After graduating, Mary moved to Washington D.C. to be the Legislative Director for the United States Student Association (USSA) where she worked on national policy to increase access to higher education including the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. After her time at USSA, Mary joined the Office of Congressman David Wu where she worked on many policy areas including energy, transportation, natural resources, and education.

After coming back to PSU as the Associate Director of Government Relations, Mary began her current role in October 2009. The role of Director includes serving as a liaison between PSU and all levels of elected and government officials and oversees all aspects of the office. She is privileged to be a member of President Wiewel’s team and is looking forward to Portland State’s exciting future.

General questions? Contact Rachel Martinez at rmart@pdx.edu
The grant ensures that Oregon research will continue to guide national transportation decisions, said U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley. “OTREC is an organization that is doing great work around regional planning and creating a vision for our transportation infrastructure’s future,” Merkley said. “This grant will help OTREC continue their important work around livability, environmental sustainability, and safety. I am excited to see the research put forth by the consortium.”

**Local Relations Update**

**A Great City Deserves a Great University:**

PSU and the City of Portland are proposing an Education Urban Renewal Area (URA). Urban renewal is a state-authorized tool to invest property tax revenues in projects that ultimately result in higher property values in a designated urban renewal area, and which draw private investment that stimulates growth, job creation and broader prosperity throughout the city. The proposed Education URA has a strong public and private partnership that will leverage resources to accelerate the growth of Portland State University, create jobs, attract investment, and bring long-lasting benefit to the entire region. The Education URA is projected to provide up to $134 million over a 25-year period for investment in education facilities, affordable housing, and private taxable development.

We will continue to work with Mayor Adams and the Portland Development Commission (PDC) to see this proposal passed through the PDC board and Portland City Council sometime in spring 2012. You can see the proposed map of the Education URA at: http://www.pdc.us/four/ccstudy/pdf/Proposed-Education-URA-Map.pdf.

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**Ari Wubbold – Graduate Assistant**

Ari is a graduate student in the Political Science department at PSU. He received a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature in 2009 from the University of Oregon. He has previously worked for former Oregon Secretary of State Phil Kiesling in the Center for Public Service housed in PSU’s School of Government. Alongside his work for the Office of Government Relations, Ari currently serves as Chair of the Constitution and Judicial Review Board of the Associated Students of Portland State University (ASPSU).

As the subject of his master’s thesis, Ari has chosen the topic of youth civic engagement and he is excited to see how his hands-on work with the Office of Government Relations will shape his research.

The role of the graduate assistant is multifaceted but includes research assignments, proposal writing, and general office assistance. Ari was honored to accept the position at the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year and looks forward to serving the University to the best of his abilities.

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**Mary Moller - Director of Local and Federal Government Relations**
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**Debbie Koreski - Director of State Government Relations**
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General questions? Contact Rachel Martinez at rmart@pdx.edu