

# THE VANTAGE POINT



American Planning Association  
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association

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## A Fond Farewell and Exciting Changes for the Chapter

By Susan Shermer

I am about to enter a new exciting time in my life and so is the Pennsylvania Chapter. I've been both happy and proud to serve as your association manager! From a humble beginning of acquiring a bunch of boxes and some electronic files, Shermer & Associates has been proud to grow with you representing PA of APA since 2003.

But all good things must come to an end, and I am embarking on semi-retirement.

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American Planning Association  
**Pennsylvania Chapter**  
**Legislative Committee**

*Making Great Communities Happen*



## The APA-PA Legislative Committee Wants You!

The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association has a long tradition of being a strong advocate for legislative and executive policy change to improve communities across the Commonwealth. 2019 will be an exciting year on the policy-making front and the **newly reorganized APA-PA Legislative Committee** is building membership to get back onto the playing field in Harrisburg, and Washington, D.C.

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# INSIDER

*A Message from President **James Cowhey, AICP***

I hope 2019 is off to a great start for everyone.

The Board of Directors looks forward to another productive year for the Chapter. **A new Development Plan was adopted in December.** The Plan provides strategic direction for the Chapter to strengthen our organizational structure and continue to improve member services. The Plan can be viewed on the Chapter website. <https://planningpa.org/wp-content/uploads/PA-Chapter-Development-Plan-2019-2022-adopted-12142018.pdf>

The **newly reorganized Legislative Committee** has recruited new members under the chairmanship of **Ed LeClear, AICP**. The Committee is fully functioning and is reviewing legislation and planning policy and has scheduled training in legislative advocacy and tracking. The Chapter is seeking legislation monitoring consulting services to supplement the work of the Committee in tracking and understanding planning related legislation. You can expect frequent reports from the Legislative Committee as it goes about its work.

A Bylaws Committee has been appointed and is reviewing our current bylaws to be sure they reflect our structure and operations appropriately. We'll have more to report later this year. The Chapter has struggled with planning student outreach. Engaging planning students and organizations at the universities is very important to our organization and the future of the profession in Pennsylvania. I am hopeful that we can improve our performance in this regard beginning this year. **If you have an interest in student engagement, please contact me and let me know your thoughts.**

As you may know by now, our Chapter Administrator, Susan Shermer, is leaving us this year. The Chapter has advertised for chapter administrative services and we hope to have a new Administrator on board this spring. Susan has been a vital part of our success. She has been the heart of the Chapter, making sure that our day to day operations are carried out, keeping our finances in order, planning and executing our excellent annual conferences, and "herding the cats" who are the Directors so that we're all going in the same direction. Association management was a new venture for me when I first joined the Chapter Board of Directors a few years ago. Susan quickly became a trusted advisor and mentor, especially when I assumed the role of president. I will miss Susan's expertise and good humor, but I wish her the very best in her well-deserved retirement. Please do the same. ♦



American Planning Association **Pennsylvania Chapter**

Making Great Communities Happen

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## **PA Chapter** *Executive Committee*

### **PRESIDENT**

**James Cowhey, AICP**  
Lancaster County Planning Commission

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

**Amy McKinney**  
Lawrence County Planning Department

### **SECRETARY**

**Leah Eppinger, AICP**  
Housing Authority of Dauphin County

### **TREASURER**

**Justin Dula, AICP**  
PA Dept. of Environmental Protection

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**Sara Pandl, AICP/RLA**  
Lower Macungie Township

### **NORTHEAST SECTION REPRESENTATIVE**

**Peter T. Wulffhorst, AICP**  
Penn State Cooperative Extension

### **SOUTHWEST SECTION REPRESENTATIVE**

**Laura Ludwig, AICP**  
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### **PAST PRESIDENT**

**Brian O'Leary, AICP**  
Chester County Planning Commission

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Zachery Hammaker

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### *Central*

**Rachelle Abbott, AICP**  
STEP, Inc.

### *Lehigh Valley*

**Sara Pandl, AICP/RLA**  
Lower Macungie Township

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**Peter Wulffhorst, AICP**  
Penn State Cooperative Extension

### *Northwest*

**Amy McKinney**  
Lawrence County Planning Department

### *Southwest*

**Justin Dula, AICP**  
PA Dept. of Environmental Protection

### *Southwest*

**Laura Ludwig, AICP**  
North Fayette Township

## *Committee Chairs*

*Professional Development  
Officer/Professional Development  
Committee Chair*

**Alexis Williams, AICP, PP**

*Planning Officials Development  
Officer/Chair of the Planning Officials  
Development Committee*

**Troy Truax, AICP**

*Communications/Membership Co-Chairs*

**Amy Evans, AICP**  
**Amy McKinney**

*Education Committee Chair*  
**David McFarland, III, AICP**

*Legislative Committee Chair*  
**Ed LeClear, AICP**

Contact information is available at  
[www.planningpa.org](http://www.planningpa.org) under "About Us"

Does your employer fully understand the value of the AICP Certification? APA market research has demonstrated that 90% of employers agree that professional development is important, but only 50% support and help fund AICP certification.

APA has embarked on a new marketing campaign focused on employers. The goal of the campaign is to improve and increase the perception of AICP among employers so that they see the value of AICP certification on their teams. APA wants employers to hire AICP members and support existing AICP employees in earning and maintaining their credential.

APA has launched a new video, called "The Value of AICP-Certified Planners." The video features two AICP members who hire planners, one from the private sector and the other from the public sector. The video ends with a call to visit a new webpage – [planning.org/aicp/employers](http://planning.org/aicp/employers). The video is also embedded on this page. If you are considering applying for AICP certification and plan to speak to your employer about why AICP is important, you can use the video and webpage to support your talking points. And as always, feel free to reach out to myself or your local APA-PA Professional Development Committee representative regarding any questions you have about the value of AICP and preparing for the exam. ♦



## welcome New PA Chapter Members!

**WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBER** who joined the PA Chapter. The PA Chapter membership includes nearly 2,500 planning officials, professional planners, and others who care about how Pennsylvania continues to grow the places where we live, work, and enjoy recreation. The Board and staff are available to answer any questions. Feel free to contact the Chapter Office at 717-671-4510. Board member contact information is available at [www.planningpa.org](http://www.planningpa.org) under **About Us**.

### Organizational Members:

Lower Nazareth Township,  
Lehigh Valley/Berks Section

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to the newly certified planners who have passed the Fall 2018 Comprehensive Planning Exam and joined the AICP!

- Kyle Brown
- Shannon Calluori
- Patrick Clark
- Gregory Garthe
- Daniel Levin
- Katherine Liss
- Tamara Mittman
- Kathleen Riek
- Brooke Schmoll
- Vanessa Shamberg
- Brandon Williams

Also, congratulations to the newest AICP Candidates!

- Shruthi Arvind
- Steven Bevan
- Devon DeVecchio
- Kathryn Frangos
- Madeleine Helmer
- George Schieferdecker

The AICP Candidate Pilot Program is an initiative offered by APA for students and graduates of PAB-accredited programs that provides the opportunity to sit for the AICP exam prior to earning professional planning experience. For more information on the AICP Candidate Pilot Program visit: <https://www.planning.org/aicp/candidate/> APA has also prepared a new information webinar about the Candidate Pilot Program available here: <https://www.planning.org/aicp/candidate/welcome/>



## APA-PA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



My name is **Ed LeClear** and I am the **newly appointed chair of the APA-PA Legislative Committee**. I currently serve as the Planning & Community Development Director for the Borough of State College and know many of the APA-PA membership from my

days working at the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. I have the pleasure of working with a group of dedicated, savvy and experienced planners on the committee and I look forward to building the committee's organizational infrastructure to further sound planning, development and preservation legislation and policy.

The committee is focused on **three areas of service to the Chapter: monitoring, evaluating, and advocating for legislation and executive-branch policy at primarily the state and federal levels**. We are starting by **building a network of APA-PA members that are willing to use their expertise to assist the committee in reviewing proposed legislation and giving input to the APA-PA board on**

**advocacy**. Look for a separate "Call for Membership" from the Chapter in coming months. If, when you saw "How a Bill Becomes a Law" in grade school, it left a lasting impression on you, then you are perfect for joining the effort! We are also a fun group of busy planners, so I promise you will find your time will be used efficiently and effectively, and you'll enjoy working with the members of the committee.

If you are interested in joining the effort, please contact me at [eleclear@statecollegepa.us](mailto:eleclear@statecollegepa.us), or via phone at 814.234.7109.

With best regards,

Ed LeClear, AICP ♦



## News You Can Use



**Matthew C. Jones, AICP**, was hired on February 20 to serve as Transportation Planning Manager with the Lackawanna County Dept. of Planning and Economic Development. He returns to his native Scranton bringing nine years of professional experience in land-use planning and grants management.



Congrats to **Rachelle Abbott**, Central Section chair, on the birth of baby boy Abbott. Louis Casimir Abbott was born on December 1, at 4:38 p.m. He was 7lbs 12oz 20.5 inches long.



Congrats to **Alexis Williams**, our PDO, on the birth of baby girl Williams. Ellie Ann Williams was born on March 4 at 5:21 a.m. Her arrival was very unexpected as she came five and a half weeks early! She was born a healthy 6.0 lbs and 19 inches long. At three days, she was already eating like a champ.

## A FOUND FAREWELL (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

I'm too much of a A-type personality to completely stop working, but some of that new 'work' will be welcoming a granddaughter into the world with one twin daughter, attending the wedding of my other twin daughter (an AICP member), and traveling with my husband.

I gave notice to the Chapter Board in December, and they have been diligently looking for a new management company. Soon you will be hearing all about DRI Professional Services from Chicago, IL. To make the transition easier, the RFP included a request to continue using the services of Kim Gusic as your association assistant. Many of you are familiar with Kim as she has been working with the Chapter for about nine years.



I have made many friends and learned so much about the complex world (and passion) of planners. I will miss working with the Board and committees, the annual conferences, and those occasional drives up to State College for Board meetings. Please keep up the good work, and enjoy your new journey with DRI. ♦



# New Ruralism

## New Ruralism Would Like Your Help

### Seeking inspiring small town and rural planning stories!

Is your community engaging in innovative planning work related to:

- accessing local food,
- providing for the needs of children and seniors,
- cultivating job opportunities,
- tackling climate change and energy conservation,
- protecting your working landscape,
- addressing transportation needs and alternatives,
- ensuring adequate healthcare,
- adding resiliency to your community toolbox, or
- being creative in other ways to better community life

#### THEY'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU –

Please tell the New Ruralism Initiative team about it!

Click here to share a few sentences about your story:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewRuralism>

Then they will be back in touch to get more details.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE!

\*To learn more about the New Ruralism Initiative see the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association (NNECAPA) website at <https://nne.planning.org/knowledge/new-ruralism/>

New Ruralism (other than as a marketing phrase used to sell gated communities in Georgia and Florida) is a term first launched into national land use conversation by Sibella Krauss, a Berkeley professor.



## Chapter Volunteer Profile

### *James Cowhey*

James Cowhey, our current Chapter President, has had a long and successful career in south-central Pennsylvania and has been the executive director of the Lancaster County Planning Commission for almost fourteen years, helping lead them through their most recent comprehensive plan Places2040. Here's a conversation we recently had with James about his career and his planning philosophy.

#### **What's your favorite place in Pennsylvania?**

Pennsylvania is so diverse, it's hard to choose any one place. Being a planner, I love the contrast between the state's wilderness and cities. I really enjoy the woods, forests, and mountains of Pennsylvania but also enjoy exploring Philadelphia and it incredibly diverse museums, restaurants, and brew pubs.

#### **What did you want to be when you were growing up?**

I wanted to be a scientist. I read a lot, particularly about scientists and their work, with an emphasis on paleontology and fossils.

To a certain extent, this interest was reflected in my college major at Shippensburg State College, as it was known then – geoenvironmental studies. Later, I received a master's degree in public administration from Penn State.

#### **What was your first planning job?**

Although not exactly planning, my first job that was planning related was working for a surveyor for a year and a half. My first true planning job was working as a Planning Technician for the Lancaster County Planning Commission before spending five years with an engineering firm as a planner.

#### **What has changed in planning since you first started?**

Comprehensive plans are much less formulaic than they were in the past, and we've learned to do better public outreach and participation. Technology has changed, and I still remember hand coloring maps, then burnishing them to get a nice, consistent color.

#### **If you were "Planner King" for the day, what would you declare?**

Planners must do significant public participation to make sure we're not missing anything. Transparency is critical, and plans are better when we do that.

#### **Who has influenced you?**

I have been lucky to have had many mentors. My father, of course.

I worked for Major Dick Winters, of Band of Brothers fame, and learned about leadership and hard work. This was my first job out of college, and I worked as a laborer in an animal feed processing business in Hershey, PA.

Even though Major Winters was a war hero, he was very humble, treating his employees well. He was a natural leader and standup guy.

Ronald Bailey, my predecessor at LCPC, was also a mentor for 16 years.

#### **What is the last book you read?**

Blue Mind by Wallace Nichols. This is a fascinating book about how we are drawn to water and being near water is good for our health. We put a premium on being near water, which is reflected in real estate values and development patterns.

#### **What is your life philosophy?**

Follow the Golden Rule. Go with the flow, and don't get too wrapped up in issues. Most things can be worked out with communication and dialog.

#### **What three words best describe you?**

Old, bald guy.

#### **Where would we find you after work?**

I might be at home reading a book, maybe by the pond in our backyard in nicer weather. I have an old sailboat on the Northeast River of Chesapeake Bay that I hope to get on the water again soon. ♦







The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association celebrates excellence in planning.

# Great Places in Pennsylvania

## It's Time to Submit 2019 Nominations

Nominations for the 2019 APA PA "Great Places in Pennsylvania" initiative are open. For 2019, we are seeking to recognize and celebrate **Great Public Spaces** and, a new category, **Great Transformations**. Both are essential components of successful communities, whether they are rural, suburban or urban.

### WHAT IS A PUBLIC SPACE?

A public space may be a formal or informal gathering space within a neighborhood, downtown, district, waterfront, or other area of a community that is within the public realm, promotes social interaction and community engagement, and fosters a sense of community. Some examples of public spaces include plazas, parks, public commons or greens, marketplaces, monuments, and special areas within public or private buildings.

### WHAT IS A TRANSFORMATION?

A transformation involves revitalizing a place that was not thriving and making it a destination. Some examples include a deteriorating shopping center/mall retrofitted into a mixed-use community, a vacant industrial building transformed into apartments, a failing commercial or industrial corridor reenergized to become economically viable, or a rejuvenated neighborhood. Transformations strengthen communities and the local economy.

Recognition as a Great Place in PA focuses on form and function, unique characteristics, use of environmental and planning best practices, social equity and interactions, and contributions to the community. They represent the gold standard in terms of having a true sense of place, cultural interest, community

involvement, and a sustainable vision for tomorrow. They also serve as a model for other communities to emulate.

Pennsylvania is full of amazing Public Spaces and Transformations that help to make it a wonderful place for people to live, work, and play. Now is the time to begin thinking about special places that may merit designation as a 2019 Great Place in Pennsylvania.

Nomination materials are available on the Chapter website ([www.planningpa.org](http://www.planningpa.org)). APA/PA members will be informed of the nomination timeline through the Chapter E-News.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pam Shellenberger, Great Places in PA Program Chair, at [pshellenberger@ycpc.org](mailto:pshellenberger@ycpc.org). ♦

Network  
Learn  
Explore

April 13-16 | San Francisco



Planning connects us at the American Planning Association's 2019 National Planning Conference, April 13-16 in San Francisco. APA's big event is packed with 13 special-interest tracks that cover a broad spectrum of practice in more than 230 expert-led sessions. NPC19 offers everything planners expect from the premier planning conference of the year: a great location, fresh ideas to take home, and new skills and connections to advance their careers. You'll have the chance to explore San Francisco and the Bay Area where you'll find a wide range of planning practices and trends. Over 60 mobile workshops will take you around the Bay Area to see planning in action. Registration for NPC19 includes all sessions, the popular Welcome Reception, an invitation to the Awards Luncheon, keynotes by violinist Vijay Gupta and documentarian Brett Culp, and more. Get all the details and sign up now at [planning.org/npc](http://planning.org/npc). Use #NPC19 to share the news!

# APA Ambassadors Program

By Tina Enderlein

The APA Ambassador Program started in 2016 and is a volunteer activity led by members of the American Planning Association with the goal of increasing awareness and understanding of the power and value that the planning profession brings to communities. Particular emphasis is placed on reaching audiences of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

APA's Ambassador Program consists of a rich network of planners from across the country with unique backgrounds and cultural experiences. The Ambassador is an APA member in good standing who is passionate about the planning profession and who firmly believes in the principles of diversity in planning. The ambassador can range from students to mid-career professionals to Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners. All are welcome!

The Ambassador is active for one year (January thru December), during which they will conduct at least two activities during dates and times they will coordinate with an organization or school of their choice.

Ambassador's activities can take place at any venue that is suitable for the Ambassador's comfort zone: an elementary, middle or high school; a university; a community fair or community forum; a general plan update or zone change, etc. The Ambassador chooses how to deliver the activity. The activity should include a conversation about basic concepts of planning and the planning profession, the benefits and value of APA, and an activity that brings those concepts to a community and personal level. In addition, there is a wealth of materials and resources available at <https://www.planning.org/ambassadors/materials/> for those interested in planning-focused youth programming, curriculum design, active civic engagement, or teaching strategies.



Courtesy of APA Ambassadors Program, 2018

## WHAT'S EXPECTED OF YOU AS AN APA AMBASSADOR?

1. Attend the Ambassador Orientation Webinar, whether live or as a recording
2. Conduct at least two activities during the year of commitment (January thru December)
  - a. Each activity should be at least one hour
  - b. Each activity should include a presentation, activity and Q&A.
3. Administer Participant Surveys for each activity
4. Complete an Ambassador Activity Report Form for each activity
5. Complete one Ambassador Evaluation Report after completing all activities
6. (Optional) Write a blog story for APA's website

Ambassadors must also attend an orientation webinar and are responsible for establishing contact with and arranging all logistics with the activity host(s). APA provides materials on its website that include an Ambassador Toolkit reference guide and other helpful resources.

Depending on the complexity and the audience of each activity, up to 8 hours may be required to include the following:

1. Establishing contact with the activity host
2. Securing a venue
3. Researching and identifying the proper materials for the audience
4. Preparing for the activity/presentation
5. Delivering the activity/presentation
6. Preparing a brief report and a story for APA



7. Participating in periodic calls/webinars with other APA Ambassadors to share ideas

Some examples of ambassador activities across the county include New York City where an Ambassador spoke to children about urban planning and what impact it has on their daily lives. Another Ambassador activity in Denver, Colorado consisted of students constructing buildings of their choice out of cardboard and placing them on a city street grid. From there their buildings were placed on color-coded parcels zoned for residential, commercial, mixed use, civic, or recreational uses.

For my own Ambassador activities in 2018, I visited a Kindergarten class (you can never start too young) to talk to students about the planning profession and to have them do an activity where they designed a neighborhood playground. Something they were all near experts at! As my second Ambassador activity I visited a Pennsylvania University career fair to talk to students about APA and the planning profession. All in all I learned a lot from the students, I had a great time doing my activities, and most importantly I have a part in educating the future of our planning profession. It was such a great experience that I decided to volunteer again for 2019!

### THE BENEFITS TO YOU AS AN AMBASSADOR:

1. This is an opportunity to give back to your community
2. Inspire the next generation of planners
3. Becoming an agent of community empowerment of diverse audiences potentially left out of the planning discourse
4. Experience first-hand how to apply aspirational principles from the AICP code of ethics
5. Earn pro-bono CM credits
6. An excellent addition to your resume backed by the premier association of the planning field: APA
7. Use this opportunity as a way to sharpen your public speaking and teaching skills
8. Enhance your professional network
9. Be recognized by APA National and state chapters

The 2019 APA Ambassadors program is underway and the 2018 APA Ambassador program had more than 170 APA members volunteering their time and expertise across the U.S. and abroad. APA continues to

see a diverse array of participants, new types of activities, and creative approaches to civic engagement. Throughout the year, Ambassadors share their experiences in the APA blog and on social media using **#APAAmbassadors**.

APA is actively seeking volunteers for the 2019 and beyond Ambassador Program who are willing to commit to conducting at least two activities during the calendar year with an audience of the Ambassador's choosing. Examples include: an elementary, middle, or high school; a university; or a community fair or forum. Activities should introduce basic concepts of planning and the planning profession as well as the benefits and value of APA. The application period for 2019 is open now. More information can found at <https://www.planning.org/diversity/ambassadors>.

In 2018, I was only one of two Pennsylvania planners that volunteered as an Ambassador. Let's make Pennsylvania a place where planners volunteer as Ambassadors to spread the spread power of planning across Pennsylvania for 2019 and beyond! ♦



*Courtesy of APA Ambassadors Program, 2018*

# Healthy Communities

## SHARE YOUR EXPERTISE AT THE INTERSECTION OF PLANNING AND HEALTH

The [Healthy Communities in PA](#) Task Force is hosting a second Healthy Communities Day at the [2019 American Planning Association Pennsylvania Chapter \(APA PA\) Conference](#). This year's conference will be in Reading from October 20-22, with Healthy Communities activities focused on Monday, October 21.

## POST CONFERENCE RESOURCES!

Check out the Chapter's [Healthy Communities in PA](#) Task Force before and after the conference for regularly updated resources on healthy community design. We will post all the sessions on our website, with our other resources.

## GET INVOLVED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!

You can get involved by joining one of the Healthy Community in PA's [orientation and information sharing calls](#) to find out about previous work and how your interests fit in. Orientation and Information Sharing call typically the fourth Tuesday of each month at 2:00 p.m.

## ABOUT THE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES IN PA TASK FORCE

The Healthy Communities in PA task force envisions communities in all parts of Pennsylvania being built in a way that makes the healthy choice the easy choice for every resident. The Healthy Communities in PA task force achieves its vision through volunteer efforts by planning and health advocates creating tools and resources to assist partners in promoting healthy community design. The tools and resources are created by working groups of task force topic experts collecting best practices needed by Pennsylvania's healthy community design partners and to create new partners. The American Planning Association, Pennsylvania Chapter is committed to sharing these resources and facilitating discussion around healthy community design in Pennsylvania. ♦

# Help Improve the Scholarship Program

The Chapter is looking to reinvigorate the [scholarship program](#) for students and needs our member help. The Chapter has consistently provided financial support to planning students to help them further their studies. The scholarship program fund has been sustaining decreased financial support from the general membership, which is putting pressure on these funds to remain relevant to students facing increasing educational expenses. Some Chapter members have acted as benefactors to create funded scholarship programs targeting students allowing us to maintain our scholarship efforts.

The Chapter would like to provide meaning opportunities for all members to help support student education. Our current tradition of small member donations obtained through scholarship drives and basket raffles at the annual conference has seen declining donations over the last several years. The small matching donations have not kept up with raises in tuition and have actually been declining. The Chapter would like to create a committee to help find creative ways that members can help support student scholarship in a meaningful, creative, and sustainable ways.

The Chapter needs creative members input on how to reinvigorate scholarship fundraising through a short-term, action-oriented scholarship committee. Have you been looking for a way to give back to the planning community or help students? This is your opportunity. You don't need to have experience in fundraising to take part. The committee will meet as needed to make recommendations to the Board about ways to help improve and stabilize the scholarship program. The committee will receive support from the Chapter as needed but is free to set its own direction. If you are interested in joining this committee, please contact [info@planningpa.org](mailto:info@planningpa.org).

More on the existing scholarship programs: <https://planningpa.org/for-planners/professional-planners/student-scholarships/> ♦

## Vantage Point 2019 Editorial Deadlines

Summer 2019 Issue: May 17

Fall 2019 Issue: Aug. 9

Winter 2019-20 Issue: Nov. 1

