



# THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

## School of Public Policy Welcome to the Students September 2018

Thank you. It is an honour to be here today on behalf of my family and in particular my parents, Jim and Barbara Palmer, to celebrate the beginning of the new academic year at The School of Public Policy.

You know, I have a confession to make. Every day I turn on CNN (I know I shouldn't admit this to a bunch of public policy experts, but you all probably do it too - it is hard to resist) and what I am about to say may be the understatement of the year, but I am not seeing a lot of positives in terms of the implementation of well thought out policy ...

AND while I know there is a lot of pressure on students these days and I don't mean to put more pressure on you, I thought I would take advantage of this opportunity to speak to you - to say - in the current political climate - what with Mr. Trump and all that he brings with him - in the form of a divisiveness not just in the U.S but around the world - we are counting on you and we need you now more than ever! So I am glad you are all getting to work!

My family will be be thrilled to know there are so many of you here today.

My Dad in particular was a political junkie and was passionate about, and dedicated to, good public policy. To that end he was determined to see a school of Public Policy at the University of Calgary and in particular a Chair in public policy, established within that school.

Jim understood the importance of public policy and its impact on every facet of society: from social policy and health, to taxation, to energy and environment, and international trade policies. Something he passed down to me. Conservation law and policy is my area of work.

He understood that public policy touches everyone, within the many facets of our lives; in relationships with our family, our social networks, as well as our business and legal relationships.

He understood the importance of Informed debate, of openness to new ideas, and dialogue versus polarization of political opinion & divisiveness.

Jim's vision was that the SPP develop and operate a world-class research and education program focusing on:

- Attracting top notch students to research and discuss the development of sound public policy;
- Building policy capacity in government;
- Enhancing public policy dialogue for those outside of government;
- Providing a global perspective on public policy research and education important to Canada; and
- Establishing education links with national and international groups that have an interest in public policy.

This vision is well on its way to being realized:

- The SPP attracts all of you - outstanding students, research associates and faculty to the University.
- The SPP has developed into a first class research and education program oriented towards offering practical solutions that are applicable in the real world.
- The SPP is a go to source for advice and expertise by government. The SPP's most recent Annual Report highlights a few examples of these solutions that have been adopted by governments across Canada.
- The School of Public Policy is also the go to source for the media for expert commentary on provincial and federal government policies.

I really appreciate the opportunity to be here today and to meet you.

It seems to me that PASSION is one of the secret ingredients that drives hard work and excellence. My Dad had that passion and I am sure you all have it too – to work in the field of public policy, to have the opportunity to solve problems for our country AND to be in a position where you can make a difference.

On behalf of the Palmer family, I want to wish each and every one of you all the best with your work this year at The School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary.

Thank You.