



Meet the Land Use Education Program Team



Will Cockrell, AICP

Director,
Land Use Education Program
L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
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Will Cockrell spent most of his career in the public sector, working in local government and regional planning. For ten years, Will worked with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPD), serving many roles, including Director of Planning and MPO Coordinator. He managed the Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization (CA-MPO), TJPD Rural Transportation Program, the Planning Program, and Environmental Planning Programming. Before joining the Planning District, Will worked as the senior planner for Louisa County. During that time, he also took on the role of Acting-Director of Community Development. In 2019, Will transitioned to consulting work with EPR, P.C., headquartered in Charlottesville, Virginia. In this current role, he assists localities with identifying and achieving their goals. With national experience, Will brings this practitioner and practical experience into the classroom to help students better understand the planning field and the realities of local governance.

Will holds several leadership positions throughout the Commonwealth. He is on the American Planning Association, Virginia Chapter (APA Virginia) Board, where he has served for over a decade. He filled various roles on the Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (VAMPO) Board and is currently on the Rural Planning Caucus Board. In 2013, Will started teaching at the University of Virginia, where he currently teaches government and planning methods in the School of Architecture. He is the instructor for the Virginia Association of Zoning Officials' (VAZO) Certified Zoning Administrator (CZA) and Certified Transportation Manager (CTM) programs. He also trains local elected officials for the Virginia Association of Counties (VACO), through an APA Virginia agreement.

Will's professional focus is on planning processes and government implementation. He is a pragmatist who built a career developing detailed knowledge to help localities achieve their planning goals. In 2018, APA Virginia recognized Will with the President's Award for Leadership.

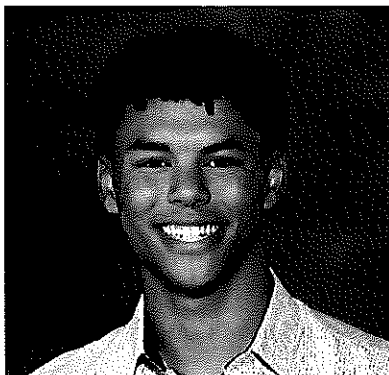


Thomas E. Jacobson, AICP

Education Director,
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Tom Jacobson is the Education Director of the VCU Land Use Education Program since 2019 and an Adjunct Instructor in the VCU Urban and Regional Studies and Planning program since 2003. He teaches the graduate land use planning class and periodically other planning classes including leading a planning study of London, England, and a joint VCU-RPTU class in Germany. Tom was the director of the Chesterfield County Planning Department for seventeen years and initiated the County's community revitalization program. He then became the first Revitalization Director in order to revitalize the County's poorer and aging communities.

Tom has written several articles and presented over 500 presentations on planning, land use development, urban sprawl, suburban design, affordable housing, and income and poverty patterns. He is the recipient of a number of awards including the VCU Wilder School Distinguished Adjunct Award in 2016; the Urban Land Institute Richmond 2015 Member of the Year Award, and the Chesterfield County 1998 Civic Appreciation Award. He remains active in civic affairs by serving on the Chesterfield Alternatives Incorporated board of directors and leads the development of an affordable housing project for disabled individuals. Tom holds a BS in civil engineering and an MS in environmental planning from the University of Minnesota and a year towards a PhD in urban planning from the University of North Carolina.

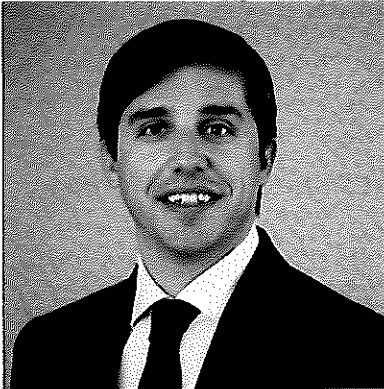


Ron Jones

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Ron Jones Jr is the Program Coordinator for the VCU Leadership Development Program, Commonwealth Management Institute, and Land Use Education Program at the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute (GEHLI).

He received his Bachelor's in Political Science from VCU and began working at the university in August of 2022. At GEHLI, his primary responsibilities include recruitment, logistics, and hosting high-quality programs that provide value to state administrators and VCU faculty/staff. Before joining the GEHLI he worked at the Office of Institutional Equity, Effectiveness, and Success and the Office of the Provost - Faculty Affairs, developing programming centered on diversity, equity, and inclusion. He has served on multiple committees across campus, including the MLK Keynote Celebration, PACME Awards, and Q Symposium. He is a member of Equality VCU and the Community Engagement Student Initiative. He served in the Army National Guard, is a native Virginian, and is passionate about providing opportunities to underrepresented communities.



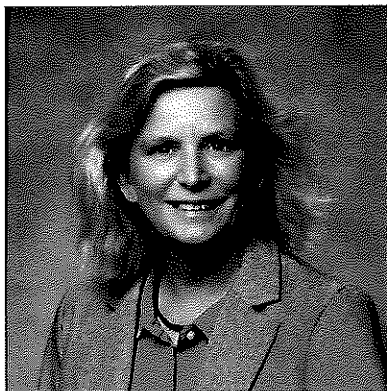
Christopher M. Mackenzie, J.D.

Attorney,
SansAnderson

As a trusted advisor and compelling advocate, Chris Mackenzie looks toward the future with you to identify opportunities and help avert potential problems, so that you can focus on your success. Chris focuses his practice on real estate, land use, and zoning law.

Chris serves as counsel to public bodies, authorities, and other local government clients. Chris also works with businesses, investors, lenders, and individuals in real estate transactions, and offers a depth of experience handling local zoning applications and community association matters.

Whether working with private businesses and individuals or public bodies, Chris offers a congenial interest in guiding his clients to thrive in their endeavors. He can work with you to survey and successfully navigate the current legal landscape.



Debbie Taminger

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Debbie Taminger, Program Coordinator at the VCU Wilder School joined VCU in May 2017. Her primary responsibilities are providing administrative support to professional development programs, including being the lead administrator for the Fundamentals for Supervisors, Experienced Supervisors Institute, and the Supervisors and Managers Bootcamp. She also assists with consulting projects, reviewing policies and budgets, managing assessments, and continuously looking for ways to improve communication, productivity, and processes. She was honored to be the 2023 recipient of the VCU Wilder School Service Excellence Award.

Debbie has extensive experience serving on non-profit boards and enjoys giving back to her community. Debbie served on the Executive Board of the United States Coast Guard Academy Parents Association from 2017 - 2019 and was the recipient of the Coast Guard Academy Dedicated Service Award in 2019. She also served on the Maggie Walker Governor's School Policy Review Committee from 2016-2018, where she worked with the Regional School Board and school administration to establish school policy. During her 20+ years serving on various boards, Debbie enjoyed working closely with local, regional, and federal agencies, which led her to the Wilder School. Debbie loves working with the Wilder team to help others grow in their professional development as that impacts not only the individual but also everyone they work with and the clients they serve.



Alan Simpson

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Alan Simpson, Researcher Manager, is a recent graduate of the University of Virginia School of Architecture, earning a Bachelor of Urban and Environmental Planning degree with highest honors in May 2022 and a Master of Urban and Environmental Planning degree in May 2023.

Additionally, Alan received the School of Architecture's Edgar J. Shannon Award in 2022, which is presented by the Z Society to the student in each school of the University of Virginia who has contributed the most to that school through academic excellence, leadership, and extracurricular involvement. He also received the American Planning Association's Outstanding Student Award for the University of Virginia in 2022.

Alan joined EPR as an intern in August 2021 and became a full-time Planner upon graduation in May 2023. During his time at EPR, he has contributed to various projects, including comprehensive plan updates, community engagement efforts, and hazard mitigation planning.