

Pathways

Spring 2009 Newsletter
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Hatfield School Fosters Student Success

Note to '09 grads: Your knowledge more valuable in uncertain times

In these times of economic uncertainty, students often question the value of their degree. My experience over the past year is that my degree, a Master's of Public Administration (MPA) from the Hatfield School is well worth the student loans and hard work.

My name is Leslie Waldow. I am a 2008 MPA Graduate and a recipient of the Faculty-nominated *Academic Achievement Award for Outstanding Professional Development* given to students who also works full time in the community. I use my degree every day as the Training Coordinator for the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice.

At PSU, I specialized in Project/Program Management under the guidance of Dr. Phillip Cooper and Dr. Marcus Ingle. This specialization allowed me to enhance my competencies in project management, further develop my skills in course/program assessment and evaluation, work cross-culturally, and gain additional skills in working with multiple government agencies and interagency collaboration. By working while earning my degree, I was able to integrate my learning of academic/theoretical principles with the practical experiences, applying new skills to improve job processes, enhancing project development and gaining new leadership opportunities.

As I moved through the MPA program from June 2005 to June 2008, I was promoted within my organization, which increased my responsibilities and the scope of my work. Today, I manage the training needs for 450 part- and full-time employees, provide budget management, and develop comprehensive department and division training initiatives. This evolution is directly correlated to my ability to apply what I learned in the MPA program to real-life.

Is a Hatfield degree valuable? Yes. As graduates, students, professors, and supporters of the Hatfield School, we are Oregon's leaders in all levels of public service. With the strong foundation you receive at PSU, I am confident that the class of 2009 will rise to the occasion, continuing the Hatfield tradition of graduates serving as community leaders — letting our knowledge serve the city, the county, and beyond.

- LESLIE WALDOW, MPA, 2008

Student and alum strive for equity, public trust in justice

WRITTEN BY REBECCA JOHNSON

For Emily Covelli and Alyssa Tibbs, talking with police on a regular basis has been one of the most valuable educational experiences in the Hatfield School of Government's Master's of Criminology and Criminal Justice program. Covelli, who graduated from the program in 2008, and Tibbs, a current student, are working with Division Chair Dr. Brian Renauer on the Law Enforcement Contacts Policy and Data Review Committee (LECC). The LECC assists law enforcement agencies by promoting public trust and confidence in their work and policies. The research and training provided by the LECC members addresses public perceptions of inequitable and unlawful discrimination based on race, color or national origin — otherwise known as racial profiling.

"One of the best things about the work that we are doing is the training that we are providing to law enforcement are well received and we're told that the way they're conducted is not standard for an ethics training in this field," says Covelli, "It doesn't rely on 'beating participants over the head' with how things should be done. The information is presented in a way that people can process it because it recognizes that everyone is impacted by stereotypes and prejudice. One officer said that he thought it was the best training he's had in over 20 years. While not everyone feels the same way about it, I think we are really making a difference in the way people think about racial profiling in the law enforcement community."

Covelli's interests in criminal justice were sparked as an undergraduate in the Psychology department at PSU. "I found that all my papers tended to be centered on corrections. I volunteered for three years at the Coffee Creek prison teaching non-violent communication to female offenders. My advisor was the one that recommended



Alumna Emily Covelli and CCJ student Alyssa Tibbs bridge the gap between research and community awareness of racial profiling

looking at the Master's program in Criminology and Criminal Justice, she thought it might be a good fit for me," recalls Covelli. Covelli specialized in Statistics and Research Methods as well as Drug and Alcohol issues. Originally hired as a Graduate Assistant for the LECC project, she now works full-time thanks to a major grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "I got involved with the work of the LECC because as a student I expressed interest in the layers of complexity ethnicity and race added to issues like public perceptions of law enforcement, now I am working 40 hours a week on this issue," explains Covelli.

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New specialization responds to student and community need

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER MCFARLAND

The Mark O. Hatfield School of Government, Division of Public Administration is expanding its core offerings with the introduction of a local government specialization for its Master of Public Administration (MPA) students. According to a 2007 U.S. Census report, in Oregon alone, there are 1,546 local governments with 161,419 employees. Nationally, a 2002 U.S. Census report found that 63.1 percent of public employees work in local government.

"Our role is not only to be concerned about the local government specialization, but to engage with local government professionals and, if we can, to help build capacity," said Dr. Phillip Cooper, Professor, Public Administration, and a member of the specialization's core faculty.

The rationale behind offering a local government specialization is beyond sheer numbers. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) found that there is a graying of the local government management workforce — only 13 percent of city managers are 40 years of age or under — and thus a real need to engage people in this work. Many believe PSU's Hatfield School, a local institution dedicated to preparing students for public service, and nestled amid several local governments, is perfectly positioned to meet a need and prepare students for future success in local government.

"Even though most public administrators work in local government, few MPA programs provide education that is targeted to local government management. PSU's program will meet a critical

need in the city management profession. Portland is surrounded by some 40 professionally-managed council-manager cities and counties, and I think it would be great for PSU to 'let knowledge serve the cities.' I also think by having the Hatfield School promote careers in local government management, a lot of students will discover an incredibly fulfilling way to make a difference in the world," states Scott Lazenby, City Manager, Sandy, Oregon, one of six local government practitioners serving on the Advisory Committee for the specialization. Lazenby is also currently writing his PSU Public Administration and Policy doctoral dissertation on the competencies that the best city managers use and comparing these competencies with the content of MPA programs.

Not only is the local government specialization responsive to community needs, it will enhance an already budding student interest. Jordan Wheeler, a 2007 PSU MPA graduate, created a personalized local government specialization under the guidance of his advisor, Dr. Cooper. Wheeler won the Robert Kincaid Memorial Internship in the City of Lake Oswego and won the ICMA Stene Award, a national award given to a MPA student with a local government focus. Wheeler works as a Management Analyst at the City of Lake Oswego, and aspires to be a city manager.

"In a sense, I sort of feel like a pioneer of the local government program at PSU. I had a wonderful experience working with city administrators on specific projects that applied classroom material while providing value to the organization," says Wheeler. "I think having a local government specialization at PSU elevates the local government career path as an option for students interested in

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Community-Based Service Learning programs cultivate global student leadership skills within local and international contexts

WRITTEN BY SARAH SIMPSON & KEVIN KECSKES

Think about creating an international, enhanced learning environment and consider this: ten graduate students from the Hatfield School of Government, two PSU undergraduate seniors, and 25 Vietnamese students from varying disciplines coming together to learn about and practice leadership and civic skills within the context of sustainability. Add a focus on increasing understanding about cross-cultural communication and diverse learning backgrounds. Now, imagine the heat, sounds, and smells of Ho Chi Minh City. Finally, envision the learning that could be shared during a multi-day community-based learning (CBL), global civic leadership course. This exciting experience occurred in Vietnam last December.

One of the objectives of the three-year partnership between the University of Science in Ho Chi Minh City and Portland State University's Hatfield School of Government and the Center for Academic Excellence is to cultivate student leadership skills through the medium of community-engaged learning environments. CBL offers opportunities for team building, public speaking, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, conflict resolution, community outreach, and fun. Vietnamese educators report that these skills and activities are noticeably lacking in the current Vietnamese educational system.

The teaching team was as excited and diverse as the students participating. Guided by Hatfield School of Government's Dr. Marcus Ingle, bringing along his 40+ years of experience in Vietnam, were Dr. Kevin Kecskes, Associate Vice Provost for Engagement and recent Public Administration and Policy doctoral program graduate, and Sarah Simpson a PSU senior. Simpson was chosen to participate in the facilitation process with Dr. Kecskes because of her Student Leaders for Service (SLS) background and the University of Science's interest in replicating the SLS on their campus program to foster engaged learning. The facilitators' objective was to create an environment that would allow students to feel confident to take chances, comfortable to work within cross-cultural groups, and open to cultivate numerous civic and leadership skills.

The results of this dynamic experience that took place in Vietnam were noteworthy. After many intentional team building and leadership exercises facilitated by Kecskes and Simpson the five teams had the opportunity to generate what they thought were the five most important civic skills needed today. Students of varying personal, professional, and academic backgrounds developed and delivered culturally-appropriate, mini trainings to teach each other about problem solving, communication, teamwork, creative thinking, and dependability in highly interactive settings.

Through the initial experience of collaborative learning and creating relationships students were prepared for their next challenge set by Dr. Ingle: assessing specific sustainability parameters in local districts of Ho Chi Minh City and creating a presentation of their findings for their peers and University administrators. During the assessment in the community and while building their presentations, students had to utilize all of the skills they learned during their earlier multi-day CBL training. Each group's presentation was distinctive, informative, engaging, and in some cases, surprising!



PSU student Sarah Simpson (left), PSU MPA student Kelly Doherty (center), and Minh Nguyen Thi Anh (right), a sophomore studying Biotechnology at the University of Science in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, take a break from a team building exercise for a photo.

Because of the dedication of all students, facilitators, and community partners to create an engaging learning experience, everyone involved walked away smiling, more reflective and experienced about their cross-cultural experience between Portland State University and The University of Science of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Sarah Simpson is a first generation college student. This June she will be graduating with an undergraduate degree in Social Sciences and a memory bank full of beautiful experiences spent in her community. She plans to continue living a life full of service and adventure!

Kevin Kecskes, Ph.D. (PSU PAF, 2008), is Associate Vice Provost for Engagement and Director for Community-University Partnerships at Portland State University. Kevin teaches courses in the Civic Leadership minor, as well as Capstone and other University studies courses. His recent publications focus on the nexus between cultural theory and community-campus partnerships, and faculty and institutional development for civic engagement.

2009 Performance Management and Leadership Conference in Lanzhou

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER MCFARLAND

The pressures of globalization have heightened the performance expectations of all levels of government throughout the world. These pressures have resulted in major new global initiatives, including innovative performance measurement and evaluation systems, and new governance processes and structures.

The innovative response to globalization will be the focus of a major international conference cosponsored by PSU's Hatfield School of Government and its South East Asian partners, Lanzhou University in China and Waseda University in Japan. These partners are the leading universities in China and Japan who are focusing on performance-based leadership and governance. The conference will be held September 15-16, 2009 in Lanzhou China with the expectation that the conference will rotate every two years among the three sponsoring participants. The goal of the conference is to share what has been learned from innovative efforts around the world to improve governance systems and practices.

China stands at a critical period in its reform-era developmental process, when the acute challenges of managing its economic growth in a sustainable manner have become the central focus of concern by party leaders. At the same time, local government innovation is being encouraged in China, opening pathways for international collaboration at the city and provincial levels. This conference will explore

best practices in sustainability and performance management.

The conference will provide an opportunity for PSU students to participate in the conference as part of a course on the impact of globalization of governance systems throughout the world. The course will provide students with the opportunity to visit Lanzhou, participate in the conference, meet with students from Japan and China who have similar interests on the impacts of globalization, and learn how governments are responding to the "performance imperative" of globalization.

"The conference and student course are really a way to open our eyes to the global dimensions of the sustainability practices that we are developing here at home. The Chinese are eager to develop shared modes of thinking about and implementing governance and they have few constraints in where they are willing to take the process," says Dr. Bruce Gilley, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Hatfield School, who also lived in China for 10 years and often advises governments and nonprofits on Asian issues such as legitimacy, democracy, and human rights.

The conference and student program will be led by Dr. Ronald Tammen, Director of the Hatfield School of Government, Dr. Douglas Morgan, Professor of Public Administration and Director of the Executive Leadership Institute, and Dr. Bruce Gilley, who have extensive experience working and traveling in China.

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In her own words: Meredith Sorensen's trash and travel

Meredith Sorensen received her Master of Public Administration from the Hatfield School of Government in Spring 2008. She coordinated the Waste Minimization and Recycling Program at Portland International Airport through Community Environmental Services (CES), a sub research unit under PSU's Center for Urban Studies. In 2008, Sorensen received the prestigious Mary Elvira Stevens Traveling Fellowship from Wellesley College. The fellowship permits Sorensen to spend nine months traveling for professional development.



Meredith Sorensen in Frankfurt, Germany.

"I received a fellowship to travel and look at trash. The interview committee informed me that I was the only person that had ever included a garbage bag with a proposal. It was not just any garbage bag; it was a green, compostable garbage bag. I like to think that it was my blend of credentials and work experience, instead of a flashy application stunt, that 'bagged' the opportunity to look at waste management policies in different communities. Whatever it was, here I am with 1,500 photos of trash cans from Europe and Central America," says Meredith Sorensen of her receipt of the fellowship.

According to Sorensen, highlights from the past few months include: attending an international conference on organic diversion in the European Union capital, Brussels (as the only American); interning with Frankfurt International Airport's waste management department; exploring the economics of recycling in Baja, Mexico (i.e., cows eat diapers). Her research continues in Mexico and points further south.

Sorensen says she enjoys her role as a trash ambassador, learning how policies can shape behavior at garbage bins around the world. Sorensen will share her findings during her keynote address, "Trash and Travel: The World and Waste" at the Association of Oregon Recyclers (AOR) Conference on June 13, 2009.

FROM SORENSEN'S BLOG: MARCH 28, 2009

We see plastic bottles all over. Anywhere there's a sign, "Don't put trash here," there's sure to be trash. The sources range from intentional — from dumping bags of rubbish to chucking broken CD's out the window — to

careless — blowing out the back of a truck — to somewhere in between. One man's business cards littered the side of the road for at least three kilometers. Was this curious propaganda for his business? Or had he just packed up his office and accidentally left his trunk open? Or was his kid mischievously chucking the cards out the window? ...

The dump was quite a dramatic scene. Billows of smoke wafted up from an abyss that created beautiful shadow-effects in the late afternoon sun. A man pulled up in his personal car and chucked bags of trash and yard debris off the cliff, as if to demonstrate how easy and carefree it is to get rid of crap in this town. The guard, Jorge, led us on a little trail to the side and proudly described the dump's features. It is 14 meters deep. It occasionally gets lit on fire, and pushed further back into the cave/hole by a machine.

A pack of dogs lives and breeds down there, living off the garbage; you can sometimes hear them rattling around or yipping. People occasionally belay down into the rubbish to scavenge for metal. Sometimes, they die and have to be pulled back up (that's what we think he said).

As Jorge spoke, the smoke cleared a bit and I was able to get a few clear shots through the haze: yup, piles of smoldering rubbish, sliding back into a deep cave. It was impressive, though I'm still mulling over in what sense it was impressive.

FROM SORENSEN'S BLOG: APRIL 13, 2009

San Marcos on the shores of Lake Atitlan is home to a crafty lady, Susana Heisse, who turns plastic bottles into bricks. Her organization, Pura Vida Atitlan, stuffs plastic bottles tightly with dry, plastic waste (wrappers and bags), and then uses the resulting material for construction. I am not so sure of the structural integrity of this process, but what an interesting concept as a way to transform plastic materials into a building material... especially in a rural community, without waste management infrastructures, in a low-tech process. I especially like that Susana's group has been doing waste audits every two years to monitor community recycling rates.

You can follow Sorensen's trash travels at <http://meredithsorensen.blogspot.com>.

COMPILED BY
JENNIFER MCFARLAND



Sorensen scouting out the trash scene on a ferry in Norway.

Refugee agency coordinator Djimet Dogo gains skills to help make life better for Portland's growing African community

WRITTEN BY REBECCA JOHNSON

Djimet Dogo is full of surprises. By day, and often nights and weekends too, Dogo is Program Coordinator for Africa House. Africa House is part of the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), an organization serving the Portland metro area that assists immigrants and refugees accessing resettlement and integration services such as English learning programming, housing assistance, and parenting education. By night and weekend, Dogo is earning his Master's of Public Administration at the Hatfield School of Government.

Dogo uses humor to make light of his hard work and the challenges he has faced both personally and professionally. While studying English at the University of Chad, Dogo became interested in human rights. He and other students founded a human rights organization that sought non-violent and democratic solutions to the conflict between Chad's Muslim north and Christian south. The organization published reports that implicated Chad's government in the extrajudicial executions of members of opposing political groups. After the reports with photos of government atrocities were published, Dogo and other members of his organization began receiving death threats.

Dogo came to the U.S. in 1999 on a three-month trip organized by the United States Information Services (USIS) through the State Department to speak about Nonviolent Conflict resolution and good governance in Africa. He toured seven states including Oregon. Fearing that the threats on his life were serious, Dogo applied for asylum and decided to settle in Portland where he had a Chadian relative. It took two years to obtain permission to bring his wife and children to the U.S.

Though he earned a college degree in Chad, Dogo enrolled as an undergraduate at PSU in 2003 and later graduated with a degree in Liberal Arts and Communication. In 2005 while Dogo was working for IRCO as a Job Developer, he was nominated by the Executive Director of IRCO, Sokhom Tauch, to take part in the Leadership Fellows program.

The Leadership Fellows program, part of the Hatfield School's Institute of Nonprofit Manage-

ment, was developed by and for people of color who work in nonprofit organizations serving diverse populations. The program is based on a set of beliefs that leadership is not so much about developing individuals but on developing communities to serve diverse ethnic populations. Tauch and other IRCO staff that graduated from the Leadership Fellows program encouraged Dogo to participate, knowing that it would help him develop skills necessary to succeed as a leader in Portland's African community.

Dogo was accepted into the Leadership Fellows seventh cohort. Leadership Fellows enter the program as a cohort in August and work together for an intensive week in residence away from their offices and their homes. After this initial retreat, they meet monthly during the year for day-long skill building leadership development sessions and attend a winter and summer two-day retreat. "It was really helpful to get to know everyone in my group, the networking component has been very valuable to my work. If I need help on something all I need to do is call one of the other Fellows and they will help me with whatever I am working on," says Dogo.

Through the program, Dogo met Dr. Erna Gelles, Associate Professor of Public Administration at the Hatfield School and Founder of the Leadership Fellows program. Dr. Gelles encouraged Dogo to apply to the MPA program. He was looking into Master's programs at Marylhurst and PSU when, with help from Dr. Gelles, Dogo received a grant from the PSU Foundation. Dr. Gelles advocated on his behalf throughout the admissions process. "She would not say no, or back down. And today, I am really happy I am in the program. All the skills I am learning are applicable to my job," says Dogo.

Today, Dogo is half-way through the program and continues to enjoy the classes and the relationships he is building with other students. This term, he is supervising a peer conducting their final Organizational Experience at Africa House working to build a volunteer program. Dogo continues to be a resource and role model for fellow students, his staff, and members of the African immigrant and refugee community he serves with dedication.

Djimet Dogo, Program Coordinator at Africa House.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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MPH-HMP experience enhances Brott's engagement and leadership capabilities

WRITTEN BY
REBECCA JOHNSON

Some of the best things in life are those that you never knew you were missing. This is how Master of Public Health, Health Management and Policy (MPH-HMP) alumna Jana Brott feels about the many experiences she might not have today without her degree.

"I feel so lucky to be doing the work I am able to do as the Project Specialist for Quality and Patient Safety at Legacy. Before the MPH program, I cared about patient safety, but the program gave me direction to advance my career in ways I never knew existed," explains Brott.



Jana Brott, MPH-HMP, Project Specialist for Quality and Patient Safety at Legacy.

After high school, Brott did not know what career she was interested in pursuing, so she took a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) course and got a job helping patients undergoing surgery at Legacy's Good Samaritan Hospital. Brott liked the work she did at the hospital and became very interested in the medical field and so began taking classes at PSU, eventually earning a Bachelor's of Science in Molecular Biology with the intention of becoming a physician.

It wasn't until she saw an article in the *Wall Street Journal* about the number of patients who acquire infections while receiving services at hospitals, that Brott started on the path she is walking today. "As someone who wanted to be an engaged employee, I wrote a letter to our hospital leadership about the article, wanting to know if there was a way to get involved in infection prevention at Legacy," says Brott.

Brott met with the Chief Administrative Officer and a representative from Infection Prevention and Control, who encouraged Brott to pursue continuing education in public health. She shared her passion with a Legacy physician, who suggested I get an MPH. Brott claims that suggestion changed everything, "I had never heard of an MPH, so I went home and Googled it. I found the program at PSU and looked at the website. The more I read the more I knew it was right for me, everything I never knew how to articulate about the kind of career that I wanted was there."

Brott graduated from the MPH program in 2008. "The thing that impressed me most about the program was the dedication of the professors to link our classroom experience to the community learning opportunities. Every project where we were given the chance to speak with people in the field of Public Health, working in the field, was an opportunity to draw connections between the theory and the practice of what we were learning," reflects Brott. She took full advantage of every opportunity to engage in learning, including designing an independent study to shadow a physician at a hospital in Uganda to learn about health care in developing countries.

"Some day I hope to work for the World Health Organization. If anything, this degree has taught me that anything is possible," says Brott. Today, Brott continues to be an engaged employee, sitting on various committees to improve quality patient care. Brott also sits on the Oregon Business Council's Health Care Task Force and is Open School Chapter Leader for the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. "As a student I was encouraged by my professors to apply for learning opportunities. I received a scholarship to attend the National Forum on Quality Improvement and had the chance to moderate sessions with highly respected leaders in quality and patient safety, which was a true honor for me. Now, I continue to be involved by asking for additional opportunities from anyone and everyone I come into contact with. You never know what you can get from just asking," claims Brott.

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LECC student involvement

Alyssa Tibbs approaches the LECC project and her Master's degree from a different angle. Specializing in the justice system and its treatment of women of different ethnic backgrounds, Tibbs only recently discovered her interest in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Tibbs came to PSU as a transfer student from Coos Bay Community College on a track scholarship with the intention of finishing her four-year undergraduate degree. The scholarship covered a fifth year of school so her coach encouraged her to apply to a master's program. Tibbs found the Criminology and Criminal Justice a good venue to study issues like race and human trafficking. "It is an act of God that I am here and in this program. I don't know what my plans are for the future in this field, maybe something with the FBI or something related to human trafficking, but I am grateful for all the opportunities I have had in the program and working on the LECC project," says Tibbs.

Currently Covelli and Tibbs are researching ways to improve community relations and conduct more outreach between law enforcement and communities of color. Working with the African-American and Hispanic Commissions at the state to increase awareness on what steps are being taken to address the concerns their communities by law enforcement is just part of the larger process of ending racial profiling. "It is important that we use this opportunity to discuss some of ways justice systems have institutionalized racism in this country, this project allows us to begin to address that issue and talk about what it means to our communities," explains Tibbs.

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Local Government Specialization

public service. As government at all levels continues to evolve, the demands and challenges of providing services at the local government level will increasingly require educated and trained managers with innovative solutions."

Carina Christensen, Assistant to the City Manager, Tualatin, Oregon, and member of the Advisory Committee for the specialization, graduated from the PSU MPA program in 2007. Christensen received a *Young Professional* scholarship from ICMA, as well as the *Emerging Leader* scholarship from the Oregon City/County Management Association (OCCMA).

"As Assistant to the City Manager, I have drawn on many of the skills from my MPA program, but local government work has a relatively steep learning curve," says Christensen. "Local government administration, city management, is a vital and important career field. Our cities are the heart and soul of our nation. Cities are not private companies that work to make profits; they are here to create communities and provide services to you, the public. Residents want to live in clean, healthy, beautiful cities with good schools and programs, beautiful parks and efficient transportation systems. These cities need dedicated, excellent individuals to keep them going strong and show that there is more to government than Congress and the federal bureaucracy. PSU's local government specialization will further this goal. It is an excellent addition to the Hatfield School of Government's MPA program, and I know it will benefit our community and our nation."

The addition of a local government specialization adds to an already robust array of specializations, including: public sector human resource management and labor relations, nonprofit management, global leadership and management, and natural resources policy and administration.

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