

## Spending a Lifetime: The Careers of City Managers

For the first time, one book brings together stories that capture the complex and changing profession of city management.

Those involved in the study of public management in general or local government administration in particular will find *Spending a Lifetime* a valuable look into the dynamic and demanding field of city management.



Carl Vinson **Institute of Government**  
The University of Georgia  
201 North Milledge Avenue  
Athens, GA 30602-5482

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Athens, Georgia  
Permit No. 165

# SPENDING A LIFETIME

SPENDING A LIFETIME: THE CAREERS OF CITY MANAGERS  
Douglas J. Watson and Rollin J. Watson

# THE CAREERS OF CITY MANAGERS

An illustration of five people in business attire standing in a row. From left to right: a man in a suit sitting on a chair, a woman in a white suit, a man in a dark suit, a woman in a dark suit, and a man in a dark suit.

For your classroom consideration



Carl Vinson | Institute of Government

# Spending a Lifetime: The Careers of City Managers

*Spending a Lifetime* begins with an overview of various factors that influence the careers of city managers, including the political environment in which they must operate. Also discussed are the competitiveness of the city management job market and the growing presence of women and minorities in the profession.

The book then explores the wide-ranging world of city management through the fictionalized stories of four professionals who follow common career paths. A fifth story focuses on a midcareer manager facing issues typical in today's rapidly changing society.

**The Long Server:** Ben Anderson intended to spend several years in different cities on his way to one with a large council-manager organization. Why does he spend almost his entire career in one midsized city?

**The Lateral Mover:** Ralph Powell moves quite often but usually to other cities in the same population range. He faces many challenges upon becoming the first city manager in several cities that he serves.

**The Single-City Careerist:** Sammy Wilcox moves up the hierarchy in one city government over the span of his entire career. His story illustrates the complex legal environment of cities and how family issues influence managers' careers.

## About the Authors

Douglas J. Watson is professor and director of graduate programs in public affairs at the University of Texas at Dallas. He served as city manager of Auburn, Alabama, from 1982 to 2003 and has written extensively on local government issues in books and journals. Rollin J. Watson

**The Ladder Climber:** Anna Lane starts as an intern in city government and progresses to a top city manager position in a large government. Her story of networking and hard work also illustrates some unique challenges facing female city managers.

**Career Path to Be Determined:** The career of Frank Vargas is a work in progress. Frank is mentored and promoted by a long-term city manager and now faces decisions about his future in the profession.

In the final chapter, the authors offer observations on lessons learned by the managers in the stories and how each ultimately helped his or her community.

## What faculty are saying about *Spending a Lifetime: The Careers of City Managers*

The narratives capture the varied realities of professional public administration practice in the multidisciplinary arena of community governance. *Chester A. Newland, Duggan Distinguished Professor, University of Southern California*

The authors' realistic tales add texture to class discussions about local government decisions and career paths, enhancing the learning experience of students planning their own careers in city management.

*David N. Ammons, professor of public administration and government, School of Government, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

This book is a very important contribution to public service literature and is a must read for those seeking to become city managers or already in the profession.

*Stephen E. Condrey, adjunct professor, School of Public and International Affairs, University of Georgia*

has held a number of teaching and administrative posts in higher education and served as president of two colleges. In 1999, after 11 years as president of Somerset Community College in Kentucky, he retired to teach and write full-time.

## Order Form

Order online at [www.vinsoninstitute.org/catalog](http://www.vinsoninstitute.org/catalog) or complete this form.

**Note:** Exam copies are available on a 60-day review basis and must be made on letterhead. Include course reference, name of person making request, and address. Publications not returned by the end of the 60-day period will be invoiced unless the book is selected for class use.

### *Spending a Lifetime: The Careers of City Managers*

Douglas J. Watson and Rollin J. Watson  
152 pages, softbound ..... \$27.95  
ISBN 0-89854-221-9

Orders must be prepaid or submitted on purchase order. Make checks payable to the Carl Vinson Institute of Government.

Check  MC/VISA  Purchase Order

**Add sales tax**, if applicable, at the current rate for your county and city. Add shipping:

Net Book Order	Library Rate	UPS Ground
More than \$20	Not applicable	\$6 first book, \$1 ea. add'l book.

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

If credit card, account no.

Exp. date

### Return to:

Publications Program  
Carl Vinson Institute of Government  
University of Georgia  
201 N. Milledge Ave., Athens, GA 30602-5482

Questions?

Call 706-542-6214; FAX 706-542-6239;  
E-mail [pou@cviog.uga.edu](mailto:pou@cviog.uga.edu).