



Margaret Taylor Writing Prizes 2013

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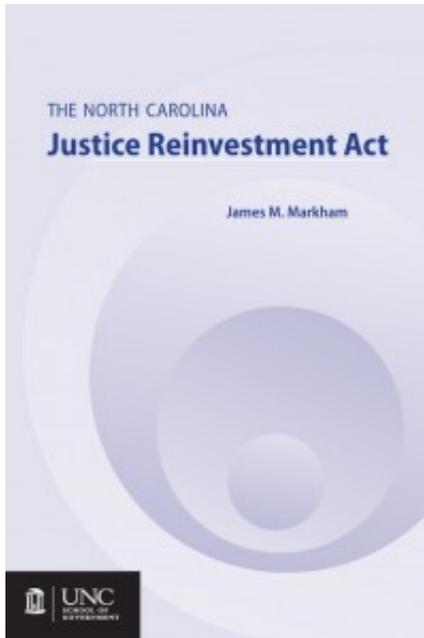
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Last year we announced the first recipients of the Margaret Taylor Writing Prizes, which we created with the help of generous donors to honor good writing and editing at the School. Margaret was an editor with the Institute of Government who was known as a “defender of and standard-bearer for the plain style.” What did that mean? Donald Hayman was a faculty member who insisted that MPA students demonstrate the same style, which he described as “clear, concise, and free of ambiguity.”

Margaret was highly regarded and appreciated for her commitment to good writing, her hard work and attention to detail, and her willingness to help authors become better writers. As one who benefited from her sharp blue pencil, Margaret insisted that everyone could become a better writer—and she helped to insure that you made progress. These prizes honor Margaret by recognizing good writing and editing by our colleagues.

There are two awards. One is for “collaboration between authors and editors who achieve the plain style for which Margaret Taylor was highly regarded.” For this award the selection committee unanimously recommended *The North Carolina Reinvestment Act*, edited by Jennifer Henderson and written by Jamie Markham.



Here is what the committee said: “The book comprehensively describes sweeping changes to the law of sentencing and corrections in North Carolina. The author and editor worked together expertly within guidelines from an external funding source, the Division of Adult Correction, North Carolina Department of Public Safety, and a compressed publication schedule to produce a very valuable resource for use in the education of court and correction officials. Their smooth collaboration with each other, and with others in the publications division, resulted in meeting the demands of an outside funder while still achieving the high level of readability and clarity for which Margaret Taylor was known as the Institute’s publications coordinator.”

The second award is “for an author who creates an outstanding writing that displays the clear and direct style Margaret Taylor brought to Institute publications for so many years.” The selection committee unanimously recommended *Amendment One, North Carolina Public Employers, and Domestic Partner Benefits*, a Public Employment Law Bulletin written by Diane Juffras.



Here is what the committee said about Diane's work: "It is a prime example of excellence in engaged scholarship. This bulletin was composed and published within one month after voters approved the state constitutional marriage amendment. It carefully analyzes the difficult issue of the continued legality of the extension of benefits to unmarried domestic partners, an important question to public employers in North Carolina. The bulletin contains a thorough and easy-to-follow analysis. Its impact was demonstrated when columnist Bob Geary of Indy Week quoted extensively from her analysis and noted that "policy guidance from the School of Government is widely followed by local officials and, in particular, by city and municipal attorneys. In the absence of a court ruling, it takes on a quasi-official status."

Congratulations to Jennifer, Jamie, and Diane. There is much good writing and editing at the School, and I am happy that we can celebrate some of it through the Margaret Taylor Writing Prizes. Special thanks to the hard-working Selection Committee for identifying these deserving recipients: Margaret Henderson, Katrina Hunt, Laurie Mesibov, and Chuck Szypszak (Chair).