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For immediate release

Public Policy Forum expands staff

Research group focuses on regional issues

MILWAUKEE, Wis. – *September 21, 2004* – Three new staff members have joined the Milwaukee-based research organization, Public Policy Forum.

“The forum is involved in several groundbreaking research projects, including water resource management, land use, and regional collaboration, which will move the metro Milwaukee region forward,” said Jeff Browne, the forum’s president. “The staff additions are a reflection of the forum’s concerted effort to focus on regional issues in southeastern Wisconsin.”

Jerry Slaske, a veteran of Milwaukee-area public relations, is the forum’s first-ever communications director.

“As southeastern Wisconsin continues to redefine itself, we need to take greater control in making sure that our research on public policy issues receives the attention it deserves,” said Browne. “We need to put the results of our research in the hands of every area leader. In addition, we want to broaden our membership and make more people aware of the important work the forum does.”

Slaske, a graduate of Marquette University's College of Journalism, has been in marketing or public relations for 30 years. For the last 20 years, he has been with the public relations agency of Morgan&Myers in its Milwaukee office. Prior to that, he was in marketing communications with Kenosha-based Snap-on Tools Corporation, and in corporate communications with Milwaukee-based Manpower, Inc.

“Being a native Milwaukeean who is passionate about the region and seeing it progress and grow, Jerry will be integral in communicating our important work to the region's citizens, leaders, and decisionmakers,” Browne said.

Kate Ksobiech has joined the forum as its senior research analyst.

Ksobiech has a doctorate in philosophy from the Urban Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she focused on the design and evaluation of health-related communications. The research results for her dissertation on the impact of needle exchange programs were published in a number of academic journals.

Ksobiech's master's degree is in broadcast communications from the College of Speech at Marquette University.

Prior to joining the forum, Ksobiech was a postdoctoral fellow at the Medical College of Wisconsin's Center for AIDS Intervention Research where she conducted independent

and collaborative research on HIV/AIDS policy and risk reduction intervention. She also has been a lecturer or instructor in communications at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Carroll College, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Cardinal Stritch University, and Marquette University.

“Kate’s depth of experience in the design and evaluation of research will be invaluable to our work,” said Browne. “She will take the lead role in our water resource management research for southeastern Wisconsin that we are undertaking in collaboration with several foundations.”

Ryan Horton has joined the forum as a researcher.

Horton has done extensive research on economic development, workforce development, and education policy issues as a research assistant to Dr. Sammis B. White at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’s Center for Urban Initiatives and Research.

With the center, Horton helped develop the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute study, “Jobs in the New Millennium: Wisconsin’s Regional Economies 1999-2003.” Also, he authored the “Burleigh Street Revitalization Guide” to help spur economic development along that street’s corridor, and a report for the *Making Connections* initiative that provided policymakers with a “snapshot” view of the W-2 (Wisconsin’s welfare reform program) population in Milwaukee’s most economically and socially isolated neighborhoods.

A Madison, Wis. native, Horton had been the assistant director of operations of the Badger State Games. He also had lived in San Francisco for several years where he was a mutual fund specialist for Charles Schwab & Co. Inc.

Horton has a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's degree in urban planning, both from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The Public Policy Forum is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization dedicated to enhancing the effectiveness of government and the development of southeastern Wisconsin through objective research of regional public policy issues.