



# New Fellow Spotlight

## Rendell Jones

Rendell L. Jones is the Deputy Executive Director for the NCUA. In this position, he is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day administrative operations of the agency and other special programs within NCUA, including the low-income credit union and consumer financial protection initiatives. Prior to his appointment as Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Jones served as the agency's Chief Financial Officer. He joined the NCUA from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, where he was Associate Director for Management and served as the Agency's Acting Deputy Director from December 2013 to July 2014. Rendell also served as USCIS's Chief Financial Officer. He previously served as Deputy Budget Director at the Department of Homeland Security. His career in federal service began in 1996 at the Department of Justice.

Mr. Jones holds a master's degree in public administration from North Carolina State University and a bachelor of science degree in finance from Virginia Commonwealth University. He received the Presidential Rank Medal for Meritorious Service and the Secretary's Silver Medal for his service at the Department of Homeland Security.

### What are you most looking forward to as a NAPA Fellow?

I'm excited about the opportunity to contribute to the Academy's efforts to address complex public management challenges. I have long read about NAPA's work to address the Nation's most significant challenges in the public sector and seen the results of their efforts. For example, at the U. S. Department of Justice, I observed NAPA's contributions to support the FBI's reorganization in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks. I was always intrigued by NAPA's focus on wicked problems facing public agencies and the delivery of services to our Nation. NAPA Fellows come from all facets of public life, including elected officials, academics, researchers and practitioners; I'm honored to be in the company of so many accomplished colleagues and eager to be able to contribute to NAPA's important work.

### What inspires you during these challenging times?

During these times, I am most inspired by the resilience of the American people. No matter what challenges come our way, we emerge stronger and more resolute. Despite public health and economic disruptions we now face, we will look back on this time as tough, but we will emerge better. I am also inspired by the agility of the Federal workforce and the continued delivery of critical services. Many agencies with office workers began a 100% or nearly 100% remote work posture suddenly. Despite the suddenness, employees remained flexible and continued to be committed to the mission of their agency.

### Who are your professional role models?

Interestingly, my professional role models are not people I've worked with, read about or people I've seen on television – they are my grandmothers. Both of my grandmothers grew up at a time when opportunities for women of color were more limited. At the time, neither attended college or had formal academic training. However, they demonstrated in their work dignity, accountability, and excellence. I witnessed those values very early on and it had a big impact on my outlook on my own career and the very different opportunities I had. I knew that because I had much more available to me, I needed to make the absolute most of every chance that came my way. In the professional roles I've been fortunate to have, I've work to put those values into practice.

### What was the first concert you attended?

My first concert was LL Cool J at the Richmond Coliseum in the 1980s. I went with my mother and my older brother. While both my brother and I were really big fans of LL Cool J, it was my mother who did most of the dancing at the concert. She danced so much, my brother and I were embarrassed and distanced ourselves from her for a while!

## **What do you enjoy most about the work you do?**

Over my career, I have enjoyed being able to advance the important missions of the Federal agencies where I've worked. I've had the privilege of working at the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the National Credit Union Administration; each organization has an important mission critical to the public. While I've had various roles over my career, the aspect I've most enjoyed is being able to support employees in their career development and serving as a mentor. Being able to support others while we collectively accomplish the mission is very rewarding.

I've benefited from the support of others, including having great leaders and mentors who supported my growth and development. I work diligently to be supportive in the same way.

## **Who or what inspired you to work in public service?**

I've known since college I wanted to pursue a career in public service. I had two public sector internships in college – working in the Richmond Public Schools Department of Finance and the U.S. Small Business Administration. During those experiences, I was bit by the public service bug and felt I could best contribute in the public sector. I was most inspired by the ability to help real people. Meeting with small businesses seeking to grow was an amazing experience for me as a young college student. From there, I only seriously considered public sector employment after graduate school. I was fortunate enough to be selected as Presidential Management Intern (now President Management Fellow) in the mid-1990s and begin my career at the U.S. Department of Justice.

## **Which of the Academy's Grand Challenges resonates most with you?**

I am most interested in the Modernize and Reinvigorate the Public Service grand challenge. I've spent a lot of professional energy on workforce development issues and believe that our people can make the difference between excellent service delivery or letting our fellow Americans down. Developing strategies to best enable agencies recruit top talent, develop their skills and competencies and deploy employees to the areas of greatest risk will support fulfilling each agency's purpose.