Strengthening our External Partnerships

Ball State University
Department of Urban Planning
Fall 2013 Newsletter
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Chair’s Corner

Michael A. Burayidi, Ph.D., Professor and Chair

In 1966 Professor James Coleman of The Johns Hopkins University published a landmark report on education in the U.S. While the report is widely known for the recommendation that racially integrated schools improve academic achievements for minority students, there was another profound revelation from his research. The Coleman Report also concluded that of the three factors that contribute to a child’s educational achievement—quality of teachers, school resources, and parental involvement—the most important resource in a student’s educational achievement is the parent.

The report’s focus was at the elementary school level, but it has relevance for those of us in higher education and in the design professions.

In place of parents, we can substitute external partnerships. While what we provide in our classrooms and studios is important to the development of a professional planner, it is the community projects, the internships, and field trips that provide the well-rounded education for our students. This enables the students to develop praxis, the intersection of theory in practice. It is for this reason that this fall newsletter is dedicated to celebrating our external partners with the theme “Strengthening Our External Partnerships.”

The support of our external partners is evident throughout the year in the financial support they provide for graduate assistantships, through mentoring of students, as critiques in our end of year jury presentations, and through guest lectures, among others. As an example, this semester thanks to the generosity of some of our partners, we have been able to provide graduate assistantships to all incoming graduate students who requested financial assistance from the department. We are extremely grateful to the cities of Muncie and Carmel, Anderson/Madison County, the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, and Habitat for Humanity for their munificence.

This fall semester we will also be hosting the conference of the Indiana chapter of the American Planning Association on the 10th and 11th of October. We are looking forward to welcoming our alumni and other planners from the state to our department and to Ball State. The theme for the conference is “Planning for Healthy Communities” and several notable...
speakers will be making presentations. We hope to provide an opportunity for our students and faculty to interact with the practicing planners and to gain valuable insight on planning practice from their presence on campus.

Speaking of external partners, each year the department takes time to recognize an alum who has made a difference in his or her professional work. Our Distinguished Alumni Award this year goes to Adam Thies. Adam graduated from the five-year BUPD program in 2000. Since then he has held several planning positions and made a difference in the quality of life of Indiana communities. Adam is a native of Fort Wayne and founded Eden Collaborative consultancy in 2004. Through his consulting firm he has played a part in the redevelopment of Fort Benjamin Harrison, the Carmel Urban Design Initiative, the Indy Connect Transit plan, the redevelopment of Fall Creek, White River, and Keystone Avenue, and the Super Bowl 2012 Legacy Neighborhood Project. Adam is currently director of the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing the RebuildIndy projects, among others. Working with our partners, the department will continue our commitment to contributing to enhancing quality of place for Indiana communities through our studios and outreach activities and through our efforts to educate the next generation of Indiana planners.

In reading through the pages of this newsletter, you will see there is much we can be proud of as a department, and we are thankful and blessed to have so many dedicated and supportive partners!
Welcome New Faculty Member
Barb Andersen, Ph.D.

Barb Andersen is a new instructor this year in the Department of Urban Planning. She is an Iowa native but has lived in many places across the Midwest and beyond during her academic career including the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho, and Wageningen in the Netherlands. Her focus is in environmental planning with an emphasis on bicycle and pedestrian and site planning.

Andersen received a Bachelor’s of Science degree in Landscape Architecture from Iowa State University, a Master’s of Landscape Architecture degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Minnesota, a Master’s of Science degree in Urban and Regional Planning from University of Wisconsin at Madison, and a doctorate degree in Environmental Science from University of Idaho.

Prior to coming to Ball State, Andersen worked as a landscape designer, community organizer, public transportation planning and policy manager, and consultant. She has taught courses at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, University of Idaho, and North Dakota State University.

Chair’s Advisory Board
Jessica Pflaumer, MURP 2015

A new initiative this year in the Department of Urban Planning is the Chair’s Advisory Board, made up of one representative from each undergraduate and graduate studio class. This year’s representatives are Abigail Overton, sophomore; Ellen Forthofer, junior; Drew Weinzapfel, senior; Jessica Pflaumer, first year graduate; and Seth Jenkins, second year graduate.

The Chair’s Advisory Board meets the first Monday of each month, with the goal of improving communication between students and faculty throughout the department.

Each representative provides feedback from his or her class regarding how things are going, whether there are any problems that need to be resolved, and suggestions for improvement.
Highlighting the Just Lunch! Program
Vera Adams, MArch, MCP, MBA, Assistant Professor of Urban Planning

The Just Lunch! program was launched last spring at the APA Indiana Conference in Columbus. The program matches APA planners and Ball State University planning majors who then meet for lunch, an office tour, and conversation about planning. In the spring, 30 APA members and 28 planning students participated.

Busy planning professionals are interested because it is literally just lunch a one-time event, at their office, and face-to-face contact with a BSU student. For students, it is a big step and small peek into the day-to-day life of the professional they hope to be in the future.

Dylan Fisher, junior planning student, wrote an article for the APA’s online student publication in which his fellow classmates expressed their responses to the opportunity. The following are quotes from that:

“Students Seth Koons and Derek Walker traveled to Bloomington, Indiana, where they met with James Roach and Nate Nickel. Roach is a senior zoning planner for Bloomington and Nickel is a senior long-range planner. The first half of their visit consisted of an office tour. Roach and Nickel showed the two students comprehensive plan and zoning maps for the City of Bloomington, introduced them to their colleagues, and explained the different jobs and positions within the city’s planning office.”

The two professionals then took Koons and Walker on a tour around Bloomington showing them recent projects that the planning department had been involved in. The two professionals pointed out historic structures in the area and explained how adaptive-reuse developments helped preserve historic buildings and enhance the community.”

“Student Ellen Forthofer met with Adam Peaper, a planner with R.W. Armstrong, an interdisciplinary engineering firm with an office in Indianapolis. After completing a tour of the office – located in the historic Union Station – the group toured downtown Indianapolis before stopping into Champs for lunch. “During the entire visit, I was able to ask questions about my future education and career in the planning profession,” says Forthofer. “It was very helpful to talk with someone who had been through the entire process. Mr. Peaper provided great advice and seemed genuinely interested in my specific situation.”

We encourage other students to participate this fall in Just Lunch! and to submit short articles about studio, fieldtrips, or life at CAP-PLANNING to Natalie Macris, editor of The New Planner, at nmacris@planningediting.com. We will be collecting names of APA planners at the fall conference who wish to participate in Just Lunch! this semester.
Student Planning Association Executive Board
Charles Russell, BUPD 2014

The newly elected executive board for the Student Planning Association (SPA) has been working to make this a great and eventful year for its members. The executive board is as follows:

President: Charles Russell, 3rd year
Vice President: Ellen Forthofer, 3rd year
Treasurer: Chelsea Fenimore, 3rd year
APA Representative: Brock Goodwin, 3rd year
Secretary: Bryant Niehoff, 2nd year

Representatives:
Graduate: Olivia White
2nd Year: Charlie Rymer
3rd Year: Taylor Firestine
4th Year: Marleny Iraheta

SPA held its first general meeting on Sept. 25, and several events and activities are soon to follow. SPA’s first organized event will be to take a group of students to volunteer with the Box City event at Promise Road Elementary School in Noblesville. This event teaches pupils about the basics of planning and cities and will span three days from Oct. 7-9. SPA will then have its second general meeting on Oct. 9 with a guest speaker from Muncie’s DWNTWN group.

The SPA will be assisting in setup for the Indiana APA conference here at Ball State on Oct. 10-11. Activities will include meeting the urban planning Class of 1968, the pioneer class of our department, having students’ work displayed during the conference, and giving short presentations on their projects. Other projects SPA plans to take part in include downtown cleanups, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, and visiting the People for Urban Progress facilities in Indianapolis.

Alongside these activities, SPA will be promoting and organizing two programs. The first is a mentorship program that will pair up each interested student with an active practitioner who will serve as a mentor throughout the rest of their time here in school and as students start their careers. The second will be a program that was started by Vera Adams last year. This program, called Just Lunch!, will pair up students with active planners around the state for the students to connect with them by touring their office and having lunch. SPA also plans to team up with other organizations throughout the year for special events and activities.

This year SPA has decided to open up the association to first-year students as associate members. This will give planning extra exposure to those students and will give them the chance to participate in a wider variety of activities in CAP. SPA plans to bridge the gap between the department and first-year students through this opening up of the organization and by visiting the studios to help mentor them in any way we can.

To conclude, we have a lot of great events and opportunities coming up that we hope will enrich students’ studies.
The Benefits of Giving
Eric Kelly, Ph.D., Professor of Urban Planning

Walt Whitman once said, “When I give I give myself.”

I am a sucker. Or am I? My wife thinks I bought an extraordinarily expensive box of candy (10 pieces of mediocre turtles for $50) but I still hope that I gave to a good cause involving urban teens - and got a small gift in return. What if she is right and I am wrong? It would not be the first time. I would still be glad that I gave (or bought). The event that I regret from the same recent week is not finding a way to pull off the road at an awkward intersection to give $20 to a couple holding a sign saying “will work for food.”

Some people make a commitment to give a set percentage of their income to a religious institution. Sandra and I make a commitment to give, and we include a couple of religious institutions in our total giving. Our giving is based on our view of our roles as citizens in a larger community rather than on religious belief or doctrine. We include the United Way, the educational institutions that we attended, charities that have been meaningful to us or to our families, and Ball State University in our gifts.

Our perception of need and of whether our gifts can make a difference guide our decisions on how much to give to specific organizations. Our gifts to Ball State include not only the Department of Urban Planning, but the David Owsley Art Museum, Indiana Public Radio, and the Department of Theater and Dance. We give significantly to Ball State because we can see that our gifts make a difference here.

I hope that giving is part of your commitment to citizenship in your own community and in the larger world. And if you think that the Department of Urban Planning made a difference in your life or might make a difference in other lives, please consider joining Sandra and me by including Ball State University Foundation Account No. 605 (for general departmental use) or 681 (for student scholarships) in your next round of giving. “From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life,” Arthur Ashe.

Donations from Alumni

Alumna Gina (Bobber) Clapp, BUPD 1993, this fall donated $500 to the Department of Urban Planning’s Ball State University Foundation account. She requested that the money be used to help students with travel. We happily complied and awarded five $100 scholarships to assist students during the fall field trip week. The students used the money to offset their expenses to travel to Baltimore and Philadelphia.

In addition to receiving gifts from Gina and from Dr. Kelly this year, we’ve been blessed to receive donations from other alumni and friends including Chris Urban, Mr. and Mrs. David Daugherty, Corey Feldpausch, Russell Garriott II, Caroline Cevolani, Gloria Chambers, Dan Haake, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Leising, Eugene Vorsovsky, and Dann Bird.
Distinguished Alumnus, Adam Thies

This year, the Department of Urban Planning is recognizing Adam Thies, AICP, as its distinguished alum. Thies has been appointed the Director of the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development by Mayor Greg Ballard. He is responsible for Community and Economic Development, Historic Preservation, and Metropolitan and Neighborhood Planning.

Thies’ background includes urban design, landscape architecture, redevelopment and neighborhood planning, organizational strategy and research, implementation and project management, and municipal policy and codes. He has been involved in many planning and design projects including the Legacy Neighborhood Project for the 2012 Super Bowl. Thies graduated from Ball State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environment Design. Before founding a consulting practice in 2004, EDEN Collaborative, he served as a full-time faculty member in the College of Architecture and Planning.

He will receive his award from the department on Oct. 25 when he also presents a speech to CAP students, faculty, and alumni during the annual alumni symposium. The speech will be at 11 a.m.

BUPD Alumna Wins Transportation Scholarship

Sarah Windmiller, BUPD ’12, has received the Parsons Brinckerhoff – Jim Lammie Scholarship from the American Public Transportation Foundation (APTF). The APTF is the charitable affiliate of the American Public Transportation Association, providing scholarships to students and young professionals committed to entering the public transit field.

After graduating from Ball State, Sarah continued her studies at the Georgia Institute of Technology where she is expected to graduate with a Master of Science degree from the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering in December 2013. At Georgia Tech, Sarah is researching the availability of real-time information to transit riders through mobile devices and has submitted a paper on her findings to the Transportation Research Board for publication.

Sarah recently completed a summer internship in Saint Louis, Missouri, at Metro Transit, learning how transit systems operate and continuing her research on real-time information for transit riders. Sarah’s goal is to continue improving transit systems and to promote and encourage the utilization of public transit by the public. To learn more about Sarah’s research and other related projects at Georgia Tech, please visit: http://util.gatech.edu/
CAP Alumnus to Receive Ball State G.O.L.D. Award

This October, alum Dan Haake will receive the Graduate of the Last Decade (G.O.L.D.) award. The G.O.L.D. award is an annual award given by the Ball State University Alumni Association recognizing outstanding accomplishments of recent graduates. Nominees must demonstrate activity in two or more of the following areas: public service to community, non-profit organizations, educational organizations, professional organizations, the Ball State University Alumni Association, or Ball State University.

As a student, Haake was involved with the Army ROTC and Student Government and was a resident assistant. However, his experience as a graduate assistant to Joseph Bilello, the former dean of the College of Architecture and Planning, set the stage for two of his proudest achievements. While working with Dean Bilello, Haake’s primary focus was on alumni relations and working with Bilello to finalize his work on disaster planning and the built environment. These two early lessons had a changing effect on Haake.

He graduated with the knowledge of how critical alumni were to the success of CAP. Years after graduating, he returned to campus to work with Dr. Burayidi to re-establish the Urban Planning Alumni Board to bring real-world lessons to the classroom. Since 2010, the Alumni board has been an active participant in the planning department. The group has partnered with faculty to establish a mentoring program, practitioner in residence studios, and to enhance the department’s curriculum.

His exposure to disaster planning as a graduate assistant provided a foundation for leading the development of the first evacuation plan in the nation that directly focused on the transportation needs populations. This plan was funded by the Federal Transit Administration to serve as a pilot project for a national effort to implement the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina. The plan was developed as a grass-roots effort that built a framework for emergency managers to use throughout the Columbus, Ohio, region.

Currently, Haake is a Freight/Rail Planner V for CDM Smith in Indianapolis. His work focuses on assisting local, state and the federal government(s) to improve goods movement and trade policy. In the past, he has worked for the Virginia Department of Transportation and Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC).

Haake speaking at a past alumni symposium. Photo by Chris Helms.
Members of the Class of 1968, the first planning graduates from Ball State, will be honored on October 10 during the APA Indiana Chapter fall conference at the Student Center. Those members are:

- Daniel Bird, current director of the Planning and Building Department in Shelbyville, Indiana, and the liaison between Ball State and the Indiana APA.
- David Bird, a PhD candidate at the University of Delaware School of Public Policy and Administration with a work history that most recently includes serving as clerk of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware and the Southern District of Florida.
- Donald Hann, since 1984, has worked with E.F. Hutton as an Investment Advisor/Stockbroker. He has had his own business since 1993. His past work history includes planning director in multiple locations.
- Charles Oberlie most recently served eight and a half years as mayor of Michigan City, Indiana. He chaired the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission’s two-year effort to develop and adopt the award-winning 2040 plan.
- Gary Wasson served as the Director of Operations for the Grand Wayne Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He has been involved in other activities including President of Fort Wayne Park board and Co-Founder of Downtown Network.
- Dennis Harney from 1996-2011 was the executive director of Indiana Manufactured Housing Association and Recreation Vehicle Industry Council. He currently lives in Indianapolis.
- Glen Williams, a previous advisor to the City of Vidin, Bulgaria. He worked closely with the Bulgarian Foundation for Local Government Reform. He has been an adjunct professor at Wright State University and the University of Colorado.
- Louis “Rick” Alexander worked in Indianapolis under then-Mayor Richard Lugar before moving to San Diego in 1973. He is owner of The Rick Alexander Company which specializes in policy planning for public agencies.
- Douglas Hostrawser currently resides in Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Michael Green, deceased.
- Phillip Williams, whereabouts unknown.
The Planner’s Role as Educator and Advocate

Bruce Race, FAICP, FAIA, IBJ Urban Design Columnist, Associate Professor of Professional Practice

One of the roles of planners is to be advocates and educators for the creation of quality places. I have always been an advocate for policies that change cities and regions. Over a 30-year period I worked to change San Francisco and The Great Central Valley through advocacy and education efforts. Sometimes, it was charrettes, publications and direct advocacy; creation of new nonprofits; or fundraising and managing international design competitions. I continue to work with creative and energetic students, faculty, and professionals pushing for more livable cities.

Since 2011, I have been the urban design opinion columnist for the Indianapolis Business Journal (IBJ). For someone with a lot of opinions, it is a great gig. Every month I get 800 words and a graphic to address whatever is timely, overlooked, or just poor policy.

I have expressed opinions about the design of the region and individual projects, planning administration, good planning practice, overlooked districts and streets, and environmental policy. When I was teaching in Wales this summer, I wrote three columns comparing Cardiff and Indianapolis, including one about how pubs tell us interesting stories about cities. That column required extra research.

In the spring of 2012, I conducted a national survey — co-sponsored by Ball State University and the American Planning Association — of cities that have prepared climate action plans. The survey population included approximately 200 cities. These cities represent the first 1 percent of the 20,000 “incorporated places” in the 2010 U.S. Census to prepare a climate action plan. Their experience offers an early glimpse of how the nation’s urban regions could evolve over time as more cities consider how they will curb their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. I had a chance to share the results as the lead discussant at the 2013 APA Conference session in Chicago and in California.

Planning for a changing climate is the greatest challenge facing the next generation of our profession and has been a focus of my research and recently an IBJ column. As planners we need to be at the middle of the table in scoping, planning, and managing solutions that mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

I am willing to bet that most Hoosiers want cooler summers with normal rainfall, lower food prices and successful farms, cold winters that kill the insect pests destroying our trees and giving us West Nile virus, a more walkable city, and jobs. They need us to make a convincing case before politicians and decision makers for this happen!
I have been planning director at the City of Noblesville for 18 short months, although some hours within those months have seemed like an eternity! When taking this position, I inherited 11 existing employees and one vacant mid- to entry-level position. New managers face an interesting challenge when they don’t get to handpick their staff. Although you take the good with the bad, and there was quite a lot of good mind you, I had this one opportunity, which represented less than 10% of my total staff, to add to my team.

It was mid-2012 and as we know, the public and private planning fields were still reeling from various obstacles whether it was local government cutbacks, the sluggish development economy, or simply the lack of job opportunities outside of large metropolitan areas. That was good and bad for me. Good because I had a plethora of candidates to choose from, and bad because, well, I had a plethora of candidates to choose from! So I had to decide, along with staff perspectives and HR support, what exactly set candidates apart in order to sift through the mountain of resumes—let alone the interview process itself.

Although at the end of the day I had to choose the best-fit candidate for the department, and also consider team dynamics, there were a couple of important variables on the table. Being a Ball State CAP alum myself (’04) I was familiar with the quality of the programs in the college. Also acting as an adjunct professor a few years ago in the graduate program, I had an opportunity to witness the kind of students that were pursuing Urban Planning on a post-secondary level and I was, quite frankly, impressed. The maturity, intuition, and problem-solving tenacity that several of my students possessed was a breath of fresh air from the constant grievances of the daily blog editor on Millennials, which it’s important to add, that I myself get thrown into that category by birth date alone.

Although we had a diverse group of candidates, the hire for the position was a BSU MURP graduate. He hit the ground running partly because he already had great experience through various internships, studios, and GIS technology exposure. In the pool of candidates that were interviewed we had individuals from University of Cincinnati, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, University of Illinois Chicago, among others. However, we felt that the BSU MURP student was the most qualified. He displayed

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real-world experience and had the right attitude not only for the position but for our planning team.

Let me expound on that last quality for a moment. Although I am a loyal alum and I believe Ball State University has a stellar program, great practicing planners must have the right attitude. The life of a business does not necessarily lie with the customers. Before customers ever exist, your company depends highly on how capable your employees are in dealing with those customers. Soft skills are a hugely under-tapped resource of the professional world and are THE “decision maker” when I hire. Let’s hypothetically say that there were two identical BSU MURP candidates I had to decide between. On paper they had the same credentials, same training and degree, same experience. However, when you get them in a room to interview, their personality and attitude are always the deciding factor.

Last fall I hired another BSU grad (undergraduate this time) for our assistant zoning administrator position. His credentials mirrored the experience of hiring for the long-range planner position and, once again, BSU has someone who successfully completed the urban planning program to be proud of.

Because of these successful hiring experiences, I always make sure that I have staff at BSU job fairs and that I maintain connections with faculty and staff to feed a symbiotic relationship and to strengthen our respective institutions. Keep up the good work, Ball State!
Providing Internship Opportunities for Students
Aletha Dunston, AICP

The City of Marion, only 25 minutes north of Muncie, has been an ideal location for student interns who remain in Muncie in the summer or need non-traditional internships throughout the school year. During my tenure as Planning Director, we have hosted more than ten interns from CAP, in addition to five students from various departments of the local Indiana Wesleyan University campus. Depending on our budget and need, we have offered paid and unpaid internships, graduate assistantships and project-based contract employment. At any time the office has between one and four interns.

It is always our goal to expose interns to real-world municipal planning and the various players in a community. When we host multiple interns in the summer, we usually separate our students into left brain and right brain groups. Similar to a studio environment, this allows us to assign work for special projects according to the strengths of the students while encouraging them to collaborate on an end product. We also have interns rotate as front-line employees to ensure that they are exposed to day-to-day planning activities.

Our undergraduate and graduate students come to us with a variety of backgrounds and expertise. In turn, we have utilized interns for a variety of projects. Interns have developed plans for local parks and community spaces, worked with neighbors on revitalization and branding plans, and researched and proposed zoning ordinance updates. Most ambitiously, we worked for two years on an in-house comprehensive plan update that was adopted in 2010. This project was intense and bonded the team of interns and our staff who worked on the project throughout the year and continue to remain in touch.

Each of our interns is exposed to the front counter and takes department phone calls. They learn common answers to local permitting, land use and zoning questions, and how to navigate our web and printed resources. They often take away fun stories from the more interesting public inquiries, and their idea of an “acceptable” site plan begins to change very quickly!

I encourage all private and public planning offices to consider providing a practical learning experience to students if they have a structured environment, an identified work plan and the time to foster a student’s development. If a daily commute is not possible, consider identifying local housing options. We were able to negotiate a reduced rate with a downtown landlord for a graduate assistant in need.

I encourage those interested in providing an internship or assistantship to consider the following guidelines:

- Determine whether you are in need of a “special projects” or “general” intern. It is my experience that interns
are more satisfied when they know they contributed to a real-life project. It enhances their portfolio and boosts their self-esteem when they enter the job market. My goal has always been to identify one or two real-world projects that can be completed within the parameters of the internship timeline. Interns should be fairly self-directing after an introduction to the project and able to work independently while serving as front-line staff. This provides exposure to the challenges of a real-life work environment.

- Make sure you have a full work program outlined for the duration of the student’s commitment. And then add 20%. Interns are often able to work independently and sometimes take work home with them to show their enthusiasm. Believe me, an intern asking you for work is incredibly stressful for you and them!

- Plan time to touch base. Interns are commonly thrown into the mix during the most hectic time of year: building season. Make sure you are available for questions and have time to communicate about progress on special projects. If not you, identify someone in the office early on who understands the intern’s work program. By doing this, you can double the intern’s productivity and ensure a well-rounded experience for your student intern.

- Consider providing an assistantship. If money is not an object, consider arranging for a graduate assistant through CAP. For a set-rate paid directly to the college, you can work with the same graduate student for a longer duration and thus accomplish projects with a longer timeline. GAs work during agreed upon office hours throughout the school year and may be available in the summer, too.

For us, what began as an altruistic mission to provide learning experience has turned into a supplemental summer employment opportunity for students. Our full-time staff has been reduced to the point that we cannot provide the same level of service during building season without the help of “fresh blood.” This puts us in a vulnerable position.

An intern brings a new personality into the mix and often infuses the office with energy and lightens the office tone. He or she can also be a heaven-sent extra pair of hands during a busy summer season. However, we strive to host an intern only when we can follow our own advice: Remember to treat your interns well; we may be working for them someday!
Japan Field Study
Lisa Dunaway, LEED, Instructor of Urban Planning

From July 27 to August 10, professors Lisa Dunaway (Urban Planning) and Miguel San Miguel (Architecture) led a field study in Japan focusing on urban planning, landscape architecture, architecture, and design. This course provided opportunities for individualized projects, “hands on” activities, field lectures, daily sketching/photography, posting on a course blog, and studying the culture of one of the most unique countries in the world. The course was conducted in Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and Nara, Japan.

The College of Architecture and Planning has a history of study abroad experiences being led by teams of instructors including CAPitalia and World Tour. Similarly, the partnership between Dunaway and San Miguel maximized the amount of knowledge and richness of experience that can be provided to the students in an immersive experience. Dunaway and San Miguel through personal experience, interests, and formal education, had developed expertise in the range of disciplines studied on the trip.

Japan is an island country off the east coast of mainland Asia with a documented history of the arts reaching back many millennia, including some of the most innovative design in the world today and a unique economy in which almost all of their natural resources are imported. The modern capital Tokyo, with a population over 30 million, is in the top five most populous cities on Earth, providing an urban laboratory of visual and physical interest almost without equal. Consistently ranked among the most livable cities worldwide, the historic capital of Kyoto was spared the atomic bomb in World War II due to its cultural importance.

The goal of the course was to enhance the international learning experience and
global viewpoint of students by providing an out-of-the-classroom opportunity to study a diverse range of topics, and to synthesize said topics, in a country far different from the United States. Students visited a variety of sites from ancient Shinto temples to modern marvels of architectural engineering, and everything in between. Although not design-related, one of the highlights of the trip turned out to be Nara Park, the public park in the city of Nara which housed not only a 50 foot tall wooden statue of Buddha, the tallest in the world, but scores of protected and revered Sika deer who were so tame they would eat "deer cookies" (Shika-senbei) from our hands.

The 15 students who participated were second year undergraduate students and first year graduate students. Their profiles and work can be seen on the course website: http://japanimmersion2013.wordpress.com. The instructors hope to run the trip again in May 2014 and invite all CAP students interested in going to contact Lisa at lmdunaway@bsu.edu.
While attending the joint ACSP-AESOP conference hosted by the University College Dublin, it became clear that the Irish society enjoys a wide range of transportation and development models. Dublin City, the capital of the republic, hosts a population of over 520,000, while the metropolitan area hosts a population of approximately 1.8 million. Dublin’s bus, light rail, commuter rail, regional bus, airport connections, bike lane, and freeway systems are all positive legacies of the former “Celtic Tiger” economy era of 1995-2000.

Frequent double decker buses connect suburbs and neighborhoods and originate in the busy downtown core. Commuter rail connects communities to the north, south, and west, including settlements along the Dublin harbor. The Dublin LUAS light rail system connects several rail stations in the core.

The fruits of transportation investment and a growing multicultural society in Dublin provide good examples for the study of effective transit models for cities with similar size and densities.

As part of the mobile workshops offered by the conference, I visited Ireland’s first eco-village. Located adjacent to the village of Cloughjordan, in County Tipperary, The 67-acre development known as the Cloughjordan Eco-Village is a mix of housing densities and options, ranging from apartments, condominium, and attached and detached single-family homes in a
country life setting, with the first established residents moving in in 2009. Specific opportunities for live-work and commercial development are included and have encouraged cottage industry and similar forms of entrepreneurship contributing to the villages and cities nearby. A wood chip burner provides district-heating service, and a solar array assists with water heating. A community farm, orchard, and community-based gardens create opportunities to grow food close by.

The eco-village movement and the residents living within these areas provide professional planners with new and ecologically sustainable models for development in the 21st century. I will present more information on Cloughjordan at the upcoming APA-Indiana conference to be held on the Ball State campus Oct. 10-11. Sources: www.thevillage.ie, 2011 Ireland census, Central Statistics Office.
As a fourth-year planning student, I recently completed my summer internship with the New York State Department of Climate Change. I chose to work with the newly formed office after a series of phone conversations, an office visit, and the promise of groundbreaking projects.

Before I began working, I was briefed with the following information to help me better understand the direction the office was heading in with regards to current projects. With the help of VHB (a contractor) the office was creating a follow up program called the Climate Smart Communities certification program for the already existing Climate Smart Communities program (CSC). This was in effort to reward the communities that have taken action and completed improvement projects by way of climate change adaptation and mitigation and resiliency efforts. Currently, a municipality simply had to sign the CSC pledge to be able to label itself as such. A problem arose when there were a disproportionate number of communities that actually took action after signing the pledge and the number of communities that didn’t know where to begin. To help these struggling communities and applaud the successful communities, the certification program was created.

The certification program is a voluntary program with very few mandatory actions. Actions are listed out under titles with overarching goals such as set goals, inventory emissions, move to action; decrease energy demand for local government operations; encourage renewable energy for local government operations; realize benefits of recycling and other climate smart solid waste management practices; promote climate protection through community land-use tools; plan for adaptation to unavoidable climate change; support a green innovation economy; inform and inspire the public; and commit to an evolving process.

Each action under these titles was awarded different points based on their effectiveness to combat climate change, initial cost, payback period, and management difficulty among other considerations. Communities can earn points for completing different tasks and submitting the required paperwork for review. As municipalities earn points, they can improve their standing from a registered Climate Smart Community to a certified Climate Smart Community to a bronze, silver, and gold certified community with each level becoming harder to obtain.

Along with the certification program development, VHB has subcontracted students at Rutgers University to develop an online land-use toolkit. The toolkit was designed to help communities complete climate smart projects based on known information about the municipality.
Officials will be able to answer a series of questions relating to the municipality and goals for the community. The system will then narrow suggestions for the user to provide useful information and relevant tasks.

As I was beginning my internship, the office was getting ready to announce which municipalities had been selected to participate in the launch of the pilot program. Four differently sized communities were the first to experience the certification program under technical guidance from regional leaders. Six others were given the opportunity to pilot the program without such guidance. Comments and reviews from the communities have been received by VHB and our office, which has led to updates and changes in the first part of the program. Communities that were selected to complete the pilot agreed to complete the program in small parts, reviewing all ten sections of the pledge by completion. Points are rewarded for past actions based upon relevancy and pilot communities will be under review for certification at the completion of the pilot.

As we went to different meetings and conventions, questions regarding the benefit of the program were also raised. Numerous benefits of the program were provided including increased resiliency, increased economic development, future savings, and priority consideration for future funding opportunities. Many competitive grants in the future will give express consideration to communities that are deemed “Climate Smart” and some will make this a requirement.

The New York State Energy Research and Department Authority (NYSERDA) provides most of the funding available for energy related projects in the state. Under NYSERDA, the Cleaner, Greener campaign was developed. Phase II grant information was going to be made public in June and NYSERDA would announce the types of projects they were encouraging (through funding). With this in mind, and expectations of what would be included in the announcement based on prior knowledge and relations with NYSERDA, I was tasked with creating a document that would serve as a handbook or guidance manual for communities seeking to update their comprehensive plan to address climate change through adaptation, mitigation, and resiliency. This would become my largest project.

Smaller projects included researching solar access and greenhouse gas inventory laws, drafting regulations for outdoor wood boilers, creating Agenda 21 strategic messaging strategies for program leaders, updating GIS maps, and reviewing the state’s ten regional sustainability plans. In keeping up with the latest information and strategies, I also attended several out-of-office meetings, participated in call-ins with FEMA, NYSERDA, and Rutgers, and interfaced with various other state departments and local governments.

Looking back on my experiences, accepting this internship was the best decision for my future-planning career. As a result of what I learned and the opportunities I had, I changed my grad school track and now plan to pursue a Master’s in Sustainability and Development.

While I was originally nervous about accepting this internship, I couldn’t have hoped to learn more than I did while with the Department of Climate Change. Going into the office on my first day, I was unsure of what I would be able to offer them. This wasn’t a traditional urban planning internship, and I didn’t have much experience with climate change beyond having a basic understanding
of how planners attempt to mitigate the negative effects of global warming. Despite this, I accepted the offer over others due to the sheer amount of learning potential it offered.

The most important things I learned from my internship experience that I would pass on to my peers include the following:
• Search as early as possible for your internship. It is much less stressful to have several offers than to be one of the last students struggling to find a feasible internship.
• Look for opportunities outside of the traditional urban planning postings. Take the chance to find one that addresses your specific interests, and don’t be afraid of accepting an unpaid position.
• When you are invited to leave your cubicle and tag along with your boss, GO!

Luckily, my boss was dedicated to making my internship valuable for both of us.

Based on his actions, I would suggest the following for professionals looking to provide an internship:
• Invite your interns to as many meetings, lunches, and presentations as possible. Introduce them at events and acknowledge their work.
• Give only as much guidance and oversight as you would any other new employee.
• Allow your intern to work on smaller side projects with other employees ... don’t hog your intern.
Growing up in Evansville, Indiana, I never imaged I would return there to work two internships like I did this past summer. Evansville is not the most fabulous place to live, but it is not the worst either. Working as a planning intern, though, gave me a much greater appreciation for my hometown and the people who are trying to make it a better place. Although only a few planning professionals work for the city of around 118,000 and progress in improving the city is slow, changes are happening.

My first internship was with Jacobsville Join In, an initiative to create a quality of life plan for the Jacobsville neighborhood in Evansville. My second internship, where I spent the majority of my time, was with Evansville’s Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD), which functions as the city’s community development branch.

My work for the DMD was varied, but I found my planning education had prepared me well for the tasks I was given and allowed me to contribute significantly to the department. Most important were my software skills. I was the only person in the office who knew how to use SketchUp and InDesign proficiently. Although I lacked the experience of other employees, I had skills no one else had, which made me a valuable asset to the DMD.

One project involved creating a three-dimensional model of a concept block in the downtown to promote a form-based zoning code. Current zoning prohibits residential use in certain areas of the downtown, but a form-based code could allow more flexibility for future development. The model showed two sides of a downtown street built up with mixed-use structures and street elements conducive to a healthy downtown. In the future, the director of the DMD plans to use the model as a visual communication tool in conversations about improving the downtown zoning.

Other projects I worked on included using InDesign to create a summary report of community survey data on city planning goals and creating a GIS layer with property data for future parcel acquisitions by the city.

In a small way I was able to give back to my community and learn the practical skills of working a planning internship along the way.

For those of you looking for internships for this upcoming summer, I would like to share a few practical tips I learned along the way:

• Know your software, specifically GIS, SketchUp, and the Adobe Suite.
• Ask lots of questions. Professionals are more than willing to share their expertise if you show you are interested.
• Take advantage of opportunities to meet planning professionals, even if they are not hiring anyone. They may need someone in the future, or they may know someone who does.
• Write thank you letters. Even if you never see your employers again (and did not get paid), show them you are grateful for the experience they helped you gain.
Sponsor Agencies

Several agencies and cities are sponsoring graduate assistants in the Department of Urban Planning this academic year. Students working in these agencies are acquiring planning skills that will serve them well in the work place. Here are the internship profiles:

• The Madison County Council of Government in Anderson, Indiana, is sponsoring a graduate assistant to assist the department in various projects within the systems planning section of the agency’s transportation department throughout the academic year. These projects include working on transportation plan updates and transportation studies, the travel demand forecast model, the land-use forecast model, and other assigned duties as they are needed. The graduate assistant will gain experience with ESRI software, TransCAD software, and UrbanSIM software while working with GIS, transportation, and land-use data.

• The City of Carmel is sponsoring a planning graduate assistant to help the Department of Community Services planning staff with meaningful work in a professional office setting. The primary responsibilities of the student will include implementation of the city’s sign permit and design review program and development of economic development and website materials. The graduate assistant works closely with the general public, both face to face and over the phone while assisting with general customer service.

• Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission is sponsoring an urban planning graduate assistant to assist the department on various projects including the comprehensive land use plan and transportation plan updates, the bike friendly community initiative, the Muncie Park Plan and miscellaneous duties. The graduate assistant will gain experience in GIS experience working with the Delaware County GIS software, census data and other available resources.

• Habitat for Humanity of Indianapolis is supporting a graduate assistant Akilah Seabrook is helping with multiple projects including a health and housing research project, statewide communication plan for their 64 affiliate partners, and will assist in creating a case statement and materials for Habitat for Humanity’s 30 year anniversary campaign and celebration. The graduate assistant will also assist in planning and coordinating their annual two-day state conference and will be trained on topics such as community development, family selection and support, green building, and board development among others. The graduate assistant will engage in advocacy efforts at the statehouse and will help organize Habitat for Humanity’s state lobby day event.

• The Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce mission is to drive economic growth in Central Indiana by bringing job and investment opportunities to the region, advocating for a pro-growth business climate, and connecting businesses to resources and each other. The chamber is sponsoring a graduate assistant to serve in the position of a sales and events member services intern. The position contributes to Chamber goals of membership, community, revenue, and relationship growth by assisting the day-to-day operations of the sales and events department. The intern is expected to liaison with the event manager and other staff while providing hands-on assistance for all assigned events and assist in coordinating event operations with the communications department to ensure timely and accurate marketing of events and production of sponsorship materials.
Through my almost two years in the Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program, I have had the opportunity to be both an internal graduate assistant and an external graduate assistant. Currently, I am working with the Madison County Council of Governments, where multiple Ball State graduates are employed. This has given me a unique opportunity, and has allowed me to see the significance of being able to establish and maintain these partnerships.

From my experience, the partnerships are mutually beneficial. For students, we get to experience planning in action. There is a substantial amount of learning in planning that has to come from real-world experience. We cannot account for every situation in the classroom environment, and this is one of the reasons I think it is important to continue to build these partnerships. It is also beneficial for those who we work with, because we may be able to take the leadership role on projects that might otherwise have been tucked away for a while. Many places are understaffed or just have a whole lot of projects on their plates, and an extra person might be just the ticket for getting them finished.

This is true in the case of my graduate assistantship. A topic of interest mentioned in my resume lead the agency to give me the lead role on a community health project that had started with a lot of excitement but stalled out over the past few months. The idea involves taking a look at community health from a transportation planning perspective. I have been given the opportunity to make this project something of my own that I will work on from beginning to end, with the ultimate goal being an end-product that guides future projects from a community health standpoint. This has provided me with an excellent opportunity to see how my research interests can be woven into my future professional career.

Most importantly, I think these partnerships give us a chance to develop a better idea of our planning interest and specialization. As the department establishes these partnerships, it gives more students the opportunity to test drive their interests. It is hard to know if a person would really like working in a non-profit, a city government, or a real estate firm until they really know what it is like to work in the agency or organization on a daily basis. I was highly skeptical that I would like the city government setting, but after a summer internship and my current graduate assistantship I have a much different perspective. If we get an opportunity to see how our skills and interests can become our career, I definitely think that it helps the overall learning process and is beneficial to everyone.

I also think that these partnerships make our program more competitive. If we can continue to have such high levels of graduate assistantship placements, many of which provide real-world experience, it will allow us to reach out and recruit more students into the program. It will allow us to provide a program that has a powerful mix of classroom and practical experiences.
Top left: The incoming master’s students with Advisor Nihal Perera and Chair Michael Burayidi.
Top right: Here’s an all-department shot of students and faculty. We know some got away before the photo op, but it’s nice to get as many people together as we can!
Right: The second-year students take a break from their studio work with Barb Andersen. Photos by Chris Helms.

Cover photo: http://www.cloudpro.co.uk/sites/cloudprod7/files/collaboration%20hands.jpg