Time flies when you are having fun! It is hard to believe it is one year already since I started work at Ball State. I must say that the learning curve on the job wasn’t as steep as I expected because I had a good support system. Barb Hes selgrave was gracious with her time and patience and was a good coach in helping me to quickly get up to speed on my duties and responsibilities. Dave Schoen handed me the Chair’s baton after putting the department in cruise control so I needed little to no navigation at the helms. I was also blessed to receive good counsel and mentorship from Eric Kelly, Guillermo Vasquez de Velasco, and Michel Mounayar. Additionally, I had very supportive colleagues in the department that amplified the positive and overlooked my shortcomings. All of this support put wind in my sail and because I stood on many shoulders it made my vision clear, my tasks well defined, and my duties light. May you all be blessed!

The theme of this newsletter is “Milestones.” I am personally celebrating a milestone of being at Ball State for one academic year but most importantly, we are celebrating the milestones of our students. Several of them graduated this spring from the Bachelors of Urban Planning and Development (BUPD) program, Masters of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) program, and from the Masters of Urban Design (MUD) program. I was delighted to see the joy in the faces of the next generation of urban planners as they walked past the podium to receive their diplomas.

“We are celebrating the milestones of our students.”

In my remarks to the graduating class, I likened our relationship to that of the African pied babbler bird species. You see, not too long ago there was a story that was published in USA Today under the title, “Birds that leave the nest don’t always fly solo.” In this story, researchers at the University of Cambridge found that adult birds of the African pied babbler bird searched for the best food spots and when they found them would use a “purr” sound to call on their offspring that had just left the nest to these spots to eat. Because of this behavior, the young offspring of the babbler bird species spent less time searching for food and this increased the young offsprings’ rate of survival over those of other bird species. By this analogy I sought to convey to the students that while they were leaving us, our ties would remain, and that we will continue to seek their welfare long after they are gone. On behalf of the department, I wish our graduating class God speed. May every step they take be one that advances them in their professional careers, may every door that they encounter be one that is open and not shut, and may the halls of the workplace treat them kindly!

For our faculty, staff, and students that are taking time off for the summer, I wish you a relaxing break, and I look forward to welcoming you all back in the fall, well invigorated for another productive academic year!

Michael A. Burayidi, Ph.D. Irving Distinguished Professor & Chair
On behalf of the Planning class of 2010, I would like to thank our families and friends for being here today to support us and help celebrate this monumental day in our young lives. I’m sure if you ask any one of the planning students here today why they chose this as their path, most would probably say that they were swayed towards the major by the crazy antics of Jimbo, or the insightful conversations they had with Paul. However, none of us truly knew what adventures would be a part of our journey to becoming a planner. Little did we know we would need a planner’s dictionary to understand such acronyms as NIMBY, and LULU or all of the beloved terms from Dr. Frankel’s real estate class: RFP, CDBG, and TIF… We never anticipated our virtual tour through the history of places like Chicago and Rome with Dr. Parker, or the countless stories that provided us entertainment through Dr. Kelly’s classes. Who would have guessed that parading around on bikes with Scott for a summer in Amish country would have been done in the name of planning? Building databases with Schoen, learning everything there is to know about graphics and urban design from Lohren and Bruce Race, exploring women’s issues in planning with Vera, and realizing that a planner’s work can be valuable in even the farthest extents of the world like Nihal showed us. These all helped us see that the arenas in which planners can work are virtually infinite.

Although the days of being able to skip out on classes for a week to travel all over the country are at an end, I am confident the lessons that we have learned from Dr. Burayidi and the rest of our faculty will remain with us. We now know that a planner is not only a general-ist, but a specialist, and that their role may not always be clearly defined. Whether or not we know what arena of planning suits us, we are stepping out to find our place.

It’s been a fast 4 years since our days as Farkies, Sparkies, and APEs, and today we are all going our separate ways. We may go forth to work in the private sector or the public, in big cities or small, domestically or internationally. But no matter where we end up, I hope that each of us carries with us these words from Daniel Burnham: “Make no little plans, they have no magic to stir people’s blood and probably themselves will not be recognized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram, once recorded, will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing…”

Congratulations to the Planners and all other 2010 College of Architecture and Planning Graduates! Best of luck!
What's new in the department

Playing Host

Our department played host for the first time to the members of APA-Indiana for their spring conference at the Ball State Alumni Center. The theme of the conference was on positioning Indiana cities, towns and counties for economic recovery. Several of our alumni participated in the conference and it provided an opportunity for many who had not set foot on campus since graduation to visit with us. We hope to welcome APA-Indiana back next year as well.

Study Anywhere, Anytime with Online Courses

There is a brisk of activity in the department to offer online courses. Several professors are working with the School of Extended Education (SEE) to develop such courses. Prof. Kelly is developing an online course to be offered to non planning majors and other persons who may be interested in learning about urban planning. Prof. Frankel is developing an online course to help prepare students for the AICP exam, and Professors Truex and Burayidi are developing an online community development course tailored to high school students. Eventually, the plan is to utilize online and blended course formats to deliver some of the core and elective courses that lend themselves to such media.

Welcome, Professor Lohren Deeg

Professor Deeg will be joining us in the Fall 2010 academic year as a tenure track professor. Professor Deeg is a highly skilled and highly sought after design communication expert. His experience in urban design and planning will serve the department well. He will be instrumental in helping us recruit more students from the first year program into the department. I am excited that Professor Deeg has joined the department and I look forward to working with him to advance the department’s agenda. Please welcome him into the fold.

Participation in APA Conference

Our department had a strong presence in the APA National conference that took place in New Orleans from April 9-14. Professors Bruce Frankel, Eric Kelly, Scott Truex, and Francis Parker participated in the conference. We also had a strong contingent of students attend the conference. Professor Bruce Frankel supervised the travel of eleven students, mostly in the MURP program. These were students who otherwise would not have attended due to the expense of the airfare and other costs.

The graduate students went to New Orleans in two vans, which were also utilized in excursions throughout New Orleans. One of these was a guided tour of the Lower Ninth Ward, hardest hit by Katrina; buildings, rather than residents, remain, and those new dwellings are designed to sustain future flooding. There was as much learning outside as inside the conference.
Forty undergraduate planning students left for New Orleans a day early to spend time touring and learning about the rebuilding efforts after Katrina. The students lead by Professor’s Parker and Truex hopped on a bus upon their arrival to the “Big Easy” and began the day touring the rebuilding of the Lower 9th Ward by the “Make it Right Foundation” - http://www.makeitrightnola.org/. Urban Planning grad Jeff Kingsbury hooked the group up with a personal tour by MIRF staffer Cesar Rodriguez. The students got to see some of the latest ideas in sustainable residential design focused on LEED criteria. They also learned about the efforts to help families return to the area that was totally destroyed by the breach in the levy. Following the 9th Ward visit, the group had lunch at a local barbeque joint and then headed over to the Holy Cross neighborhood. This tour focused on the new sustainable development buildings being developed by Global Green USA - http://www.globalgreen.org/neworleans/. The students saw a different approach to sustainable development based on “net-zero” principles. By mid afternoon the 3:30 am departure from Muncie was taking a toll on the travelers. The hotel check came just in time for naps before heading out for the first night in the French Quarter and Jazz Fest. For the next four days the students mixed conference sessions with escapes to the Garden District, French Quarter and Tulane University. Monday evening the students enjoyed the reception at the Acme Oyster House in the FQ. APA IN and OH along with the BSU Department of Urban Planning sponsored the event. Free food always is a winner with the students (and alumni)! All arrived safely back in Muncie very early Wednesday morning anxious to return to classes and finish the semester. Another great APA conference and city visit by the students!
High Achieving Students

The following students received awards at the all CAP awards ceremony this year. 

Chris Urban received the Dave and Mandira-Kar Schoen Award valued at $1,000. This award is given by the Schoen family, to a student in the department of urban planning with an outstanding academic achievement and demonstrated financial need. This is the first year that this award is being given.

Nathan Brugler, a graduate student, and Derek Naber, an undergraduate student, both received the AICP Outstanding Student Award, which recognizes outstanding attainment in the study of planning by students graduating from Planning Accreditation Board–accredited planning programs during the academic year of the award. The award is based on academic achievement, leadership, commitment to planning as a career, and community service.

Amber Buening and Dana LaBelle both undergraduate students, and Chase Pratt, a graduate student, received the Academic Excellence in Planning Award. The award is given to graduating planning students with excellence in course work as exemplified by a high GPA.

The Eric and Sandra Kelly Community Service Award in the amount of $250 per student, was given out for the first time this year. This is a new award created by the department and supported from continuing contributions by Professor Kelly and his wife Sandra to award students in the Department of Urban Planning who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to public service and civic participation, and who have inspired others to make service a central part of their lives. Recipients of the award were Katherine Jarboe, Jennifer Gerdom, and Meagan Tuttle.

Katherine Jarboe earned the Outstanding Graduate Thesis Award this year. After rejecting the idea of writing a creative project about an organic pig farm and a couple of other ideas, Katherine Jarboe set out to dissuade Muncie from making a major investment in a parking garage for a downtown area that already has 4700 parking spaces. Her excellent paper succeeded beyond our expectations and is now in the hands of the city’s public works and planning directors, the chancellor of Ivy Tech and other interested officials.

The Outstanding Immersive Project Award went to Elizabeth Gorman, Derek Naber, and Caroline Reynolds. Students work on a myriad of immersive urban planning projects each year. This academic year students worked on immersive projects with RW Armstrong on the redevelopment of central Cairo, Egypt, and on the award-winning SDAT charrette for redeveloping a downtown Indianapolis neighborhood.

Advancing Knowledge through Scholarly Output

Professor Kelly recently published a new edition of his book, Community Planning: An Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan, Island Press, 2010. The book takes a pragmatic view of the comprehensive plan and addresses topical planning issues such as housing, transportation, and infrastructure within the context of the comprehensive plan. Professor Kelly is arguably one of the most respected land use planning experts in the country and we are proud to call him a colleague. Congratulations, Eric!

Professor Kelly also published two manuscripts: “Moratoriums and Interim Zoning Controls” in Planning and Environmental Law, August 2009; and “Regulating Religious Uses” in Planning Commissioner’s Journal, Autumn 2009.

Professor Nihal Perera published a book chapter and two journal articles. His book chapter entitled “Rebuilding Lives, Undermining Opposotions: Spaces of War and Peace in Sri Lanka” was published in Brun, Catherine and Tariq Jazeel (eds.) Spatializing Politics: Culture and Geography in Postcolonial Sri Lanka, Sage Publishers. The first of his peer-reviewed articles “Asian urbanization and Planning: Viewing the production of space from the spaces of production” was published in Bhumi 1, 2; and the second “People’s spaces: Familiarization, subject formation, and emergent spaces in Colombo” was published in Planning Theory.

Professor Frankel published “The essential library in urban planning: Identification, ordinal ranking, evaluation and classification of seminal works in urban planning” in the February 2009 Issue of Planning.

Congratulations to all of you for your fine scholarship!
Yet Another Fulbright for CapAsia

The CapAsia program received yet another Fulbright-Hays award for $80,510 for CapAsia VI in spring 2011. This is the third consecutive award given by Fulbright-Hays to the CAPAsia program. Fulbright-Hays belongs to the prestigious Fulbright family of awards; the one CapAsia received is the Group Projects Abroad Award (GPA) provided through the US Department of Education (DOE). It awards grants to support overseas projects in training, research and curriculum development in modern foreign languages and area studies by teachers, students and faculty engaged in a common endeavor. It is a highly competitive award and the competitors include the largest south Asian center in the USA at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. We are highly privileged to receive such a national award for the third time.

CapAsia VI: People’s Spaces in South Asia is a 11-week program. It consists of a 7-week Planning-to-Learn component in India and a 3-week Building-to-Learn component in Nepal. The 11 weeks in the field include two brief workshops in Istanbul and Hanoi. All these components are well grounded and conducted as collaborative projects with local universities. While the program stresses the depth of experience/learning, the participants will work with many student groups, faculty, and professionals from a number of different countries in Asia. It is an immersive learning experience of the highest quality.

“’It is an immersive learning experience of the highest quality.’”

The main “Planning to Learn” component will be conducted in collaboration with the CEPT University, one of the two leading schools of planning and architecture in India. In Ahmedabad, the students will investigate how people construct their daily activities, cultural practices, and social spaces in a tribal neighborhood in Ahmedabad and help them (re)develop the neighborhood. The purpose is not so much to develop Ahmedabad, but to ask how we can participate in people’s processes and enhance people’s life journeys.

During the Building to Learn component, the students will be engaged in a building project in both Kathmandu and Istanbul. The purpose is to understand why they build the way they do in Nepal. In Istanbul, the participants will learn how the overnight builders build their dwellings and in Hanoi students will investigate the urban-rural interactions in a rapidly growing south-east area of the city. For more information on CAPAsia VI please visit http://www.capasia.net/vi/announcement.htm or contact Professor Nihal Perera at Nperera@bsu.edu.
Professor Schoen retired at the end of this academic year. Prof. Schoen has served the department and Ball State for thirty years. Along the way, he has helped to educate hundreds of urban planning professionals, brought in hundreds of thousands of research money to the department, and most recently as chair, brought stability to the department.

While Dave is retiring, his legacy lives on through the Dave Schoen and Mandira-Kar-Schoen scholarship that he and his wife have established for high achieving students in the department. The value of this scholarship is $1,000 a year. Dave will be greatly missed!

We held a reception in Dave’s honor at the end of the semester with about thirty people attending. The ceremony started with a review of the “Lives and Times of Dave Schoen” a humorous look at his life and travels in pictures. We then shared a cake in his honor.
Annie Cruz-Porter

MURP Alumna Annie Cruz-Porter visited campus May 10th from England, and brought us up to date on her work, academic progress, and international citizenship. Annie [Cruz] started classes for the MURP in 1997. Finishing classes, she took a job in California with the Sacramento Regional Transit Authority, and finished her thesis in 2003 on environmental impact and light-rail corridor planning. She also had time to meet her future husband, Andy Porter that set in motion a move to England.

Annie continued transportation planning in Malmesbury, England, and then in Reading with the Jacobs Consulting firm, where she was the only planner with a bunch of engineers, working on corridor studies, roundabouts, and the like. She left there to complete a research Masters degree with distinction in geography at Royal Holloway College of the University of London (2008). There, she completed a project about how people with blindness (with guide dogs) navigated virtual and real spaces.

This fall Annie will start a PhD program in Town Planning at Sheffield University, where she has received an Economic and Social Research Council funding for research about digital cities and universal WIFI. The grant will sponsor her for 3 years in the program, including one year in residence at Sheffield. Annie retains her AICP credentials, as well as dual citizenship between the U.S. and U.K., allowing her to vote in California in favor of high-speed rail plans there. She lives in Swindon, England, with husband Andy and daughter Edie. Annie Cruz-Porter can be contacted at cruz_porter@btinternet.com.