The View from This Seat

Dr. Miriam H. Porter, Chair

Somehow between the last time I sat down to write this column and now another year has passed. Eric Anderson wrote the song “Time Runs Like a Freight Train”. For me, however, it “Runs Like a Jet Plane”. How goes it for you?

Looking back there were some highlights in the past year’s run. In my message last year I put out a request for you to consider contributing to the matching grant challenge initiated by Alumni Peter Dahm and his wife Linda. The URSI Community rallied and met the challenge. I guess rising to challenges is what Community Leaders do. In the past 2 years the Urban Studies Leadership Endowment has grown to over $100,000. Income generated this year was used to award internship stipends for three URSI students. My sincere appreciation goes out to the Dahms and all of you for helping to support the next generation of Community Leaders.

Another major endeavor has been pursuit of Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) accreditation for our Local Government Management Program. This is a process of self-examination and will help to position us for a strong future. We will welcome NASPAA site visitors in the Spring to meet with us and review program components in relationship to NASPAA standards. NASPAA is seen as the global standard in public service education.

New faces are among the faculty. We said a difficult good bye to Dr. David Laverny-Rafter who taught over 20 years at the Institute. He retired last spring. Big changes are afoot for David as he moves to Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Dr. Russell Fricano was the candidate who surfaced among many talented individuals as the choice to fill the position David vacated. Dr. Fricano brings to life URSI’s endeavor to bridge theory to practice for our students as we continue to train “street ready professionals. In addition to being an experienced educator, Dr. Fricano brings 20 years of expertise in the field of planning.

Since Dr. Cherrington is on sabbatical this year, URSI also hired experienced City Manager, Mitch Berg to teach for the 2013-2014 academic year. Mitch has also begun his doctorate at Hamline University in St. Paul.

We continue to move forward to reach our goals in URSI. I hope that you have been smoothly progressing toward your goals as well.
Hear Every Voice:
Community Engagement in Transportation Planning

Tony Filipovitch led a team of graduate students (Lindy Crawford, Shkelqim Dacy, Courtney Kramlinger, Smita Rakshit, Joey Robison, and Nathan Wegner) in a year-long project to assess and revise MnDOT’s community engagement training materials, called “Hear Every Voice.”

As part of the project, we reviewed best practices in community engagement, examining 22 different approaches to community engagement from around the country, reviewing 9 community engagement projects at MnDOT from the last five years, and conducting focus group interviews of staff and public participants in MnDOT’s process. This report is available from MnDOT’s website at http://www.dot.state.mn.us/publicinvolvement/tools/BestPracticesinCommunityEngagement.doc.

In addition, the team developed 11 online training modules for MnDOT:
- Effective Public Engagement
- Need for and Level of Public Engagement
- Stakeholder Matters
- Developing a Communication Plan (for Project Managers)
- Setting (and Meeting) Expectations of Consultants and Community Agencies
- Catalogue of Public Engagement Techniques
- Developing a Conflict Management and Resolution Plan
- Productive Advisory Groups
- Participation Across Time and Distance
- Enhancing Personal Communication with Participants
- Assessing the Public Engagement Process

MnDOT and Minnesota State Manakto’s Division of Continuing and Professional Education entered into an agreement that will make these online training courses available to the general public (keep an eye out—they will be advertised on URSI’s website and on MnDOT’s Public Involvement website).
Faculty Updates

Dr. Janet Cherrington

[aka Dr. J] continues to remain active in her field of city management with memberships in the International City/County Management Association, the Minnesota Women in City Government, and Government Finance Officers Assn. In June 2013 she attended the Government Finance Officers’ Association conference in San Francisco, CA. In January, she coordinated URSI alumni participation in Minnesota State Mankato’s Career Day (see the URSI website for a list of participants).

Utilizing the University’s Desire-To-Learn (D2L) online software Jan has expanded her course offerings for students who live out-state, serve on military bases, or need flexible schedules to complete their degrees. In the 2012-2013 academic year, she added the senior Capstone class to her online courses offerings. For the first time, students had the option of taking this course face-to-face or online. Course outcomes include writing cover letters and resumes, gaining interview skills, and developing a personal Internet-based portfolio. The latter allows prospective employers to see a students’ talents, skills, and academic pursuits first-hand by clicking on an Internet link at http://sbs.mnsu.edu/ursi/resources/portfolio.html under “efolio”. This new teaching technology has also allowed Dr. J to provide supplemental materials using the Internet for all of her courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

On the community front, Dr. J remains very active in local government by serving on the Janesville Planning Commission. She also chairs the Janesville Economic Development Authority. If you would like more information about the courses Dr. J teaches or her publications, link to her Minnesota State Mankato website at http://www.intech.mnsu.edu/Cherrington or email her at janet.cherrington@mnsu.edu.

Lastly, Janet was awarded research grants from the College of Social & Behavioral Science, the Faculty Improvement Committee, and the Faculty Research Committee in 2013 which will allow her to conduct research while on sabbatical during the 2013-14 academic year.

Reasons to Go to Ghana

Karen Kurt – URSI Graduate Student
Assistant City Manager, City of Edina

In 2012 I was fortunate to join the Ghana field study program. In many ways it will be the highlight of my studies at UBRS. I’ve outlined six reasons why the trip was meaningful to me and why it might be special for you!

1) **No experience required.** In our travel group, only three students had traveled internationally, one student had never flown, two students had never seen an ocean. There is so much support during the trip - between the students, instructors and the local guides - that you are able to experience an exotic location in the easiest way possible.

2) **Easy doesn’t mean unadventurous.** Ever seen The Amazing Race? We had our own “Amazing Race” experience when we went to visit Nzulezo, known as the village on stilts. Originally located on lake for protection from hostile tribes, Nzulezo is normally accessible by driving on an elevated dirt road through a wetland and then transferring to hand carved canoes navigated by local guides. Sounds adventurous already, right? The trip got even more interesting when recent rains made the dirt road impassable. So we hiked it instead, with shoes in our hands and water sometimes past our knees, to reach the canoes. That, my friends, was an adventure!

3) **Understand the challenges of a developing country.** So far this just sounds like a great vacation right? In reality, there are lots of opportunities to reflect on the challenges of urban planning of a developing country with limited resources. We saw urban slums, refugee camps resulting from conflicts in urban countries, flooding from lack of storm water management, soil erosion from farmers depleting the rainforest and traffic management issues. Perhaps with the exception of the refugee camps, we deal with similar issues as planners in the US. We also saw very sophisticated self-managed systems for the local markets and transportation systems.

4) **Appreciate the power of good government.** After my experience, I believe even more strongly that one of the keys to economic development is a reliable, effective, merit-based government. We too often take our government for granted. For Ghana and much of Africa, it is hard to say if the government assists or hinders economic development. We had our own [adventurous] experience with local police who wanted to impound our travel bus after a minor accident. It didn’t impede our trip, but for the average Ghanaian it would have required an expensive bribe to resolve.

5) **Make new friends.** The first friends you will make are your fellow travelers. One of the other friends I made was Owusu Yamoah a current URBS masters student. Owusu and her roommate Efua, another Ghanaian student, have become adopted members of my family and I know that we will remain friends long after their time in Mankato. Hopefully I will visit their families in Ghana someday.

6) **Own your place as a world citizen.** We have to leave our country and our comfort zone to begin to understand our place in the greater world community. When I watch or read a story about Africa, I have a new appreciation for the issues involved. When I meet residents that are recent African immigrants, I have a better understanding of the adjustments they must make to adapt. Lastly, I understand how privileged I am. As a wealthy American, I consume a disproportionate share of the world’s resources. Perhaps the biggest surprise from Africa was how happy people were with so little material wealth.
Faculty Updates

**Tony Filipovich**

What a ride this year has been! I won a large contract from MnDOT (see the article on “Hear Every Voice”) that took a large hunk of my time. But I still found time for a few other things:

- I was the Research Director for the Minnesota Center for Modeling and Simulation. We started our new Graduate Certificate program this year, and I helped teach the first course. Although he wasn’t part of that class, Emmanuel Frimpong-Boamah (MA, 2013) worked with me on a thesis, modeling parking demand for the campus. His work was published in APA’s New Planner last winter. Over the summer I worked with Slade Baumann, in our IT Department, building a computer simulation game of the Capital Improvement Planning process. The simulation is still in beta testing, but keep your eyes on URSI’s website for its release.

- I was co-chair of the Social Studies Standards committee for the Mn Department of Education (MDE), and we finally finished our work this year. I was nominated to the committee by the MCMA, and was able to word the new Standards so civics could be taught through local government examples, and not just Federal examples as previously. A pre-doctoral student from Turkey, Talip Ozturk, and I published an article in Social Education on teaching the social studies through the local community, and Tyler Burkhardt, Mike Ericson (MA, 1990) and I presented a session at the Mn Council on the Social Studies conference on teaching civics using local government.

- I published a couple of other articles with students. Alex Cahill (MA, 2013) and I did some research for the Center for Rural Policy and Development on the perception of MN business owners of the impact of State and local regulations and Smita Rakshit (MA, 2013) and I published a chapter in a book that is just coming out, Cities for Smart Environmental and Energy Futures: Impacts on Architecture and Technology. Our chapter is on “Sustainable Design for Campus Residential Housing” (see Smita’s article about it elsewhere in this newsletter).

Oh, and I announced to the Department that I will be retiring at the end of Spring semester this year. But that is then and this is now, and there is a lot left to do before then!

---

**Professor Russell J. Fricano, PhD., AICP**

*Interviewed by Benjamin Effah*

**Academic background:** If you review Dr. Fricano’s life and academic endeavors, you find a career centered on the terms professional growth and self-discipline. As he ascended each step on the academic ladder, Dr. Fricano always had new goal in mind which he was determined to carry out. After he received his Bachelor of Science in Management at Canisius College, he pursued a Master’s degree in Business Administration at Texas Christian University, a Master’s of City and Regional Planning at the University of Texas at Arlington and a Doctor of Philosophy in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Southern California.

Upon completion of his Master’s degree in City and Regional Planning, he served as a planner for Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning for 20 years, rising to the level of Section Head. He also pursued his doctorate at the same time. His experience includes community planning, zoning and environmental planning. His Department served the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, a region larger than two U.S. states with rural and urbanized communities.

During this period, he was named Los Angeles County Employee of the Month for his accomplishments and service to his department; this is an award given to one of 90,000 county employees. He was also named the Department of Regional Planning Employee of the Year in 2006.

- What do you think is the bottom line for the success of an organization? Professor Fricano asserted that for planning, the bottom line for success involves knowing your community and its vision, recognizing your stakeholders, being inclusive, being receptive to different parties and their needs, and being creative.

In 2009, Russell Fricano was appointed as an Assistant Professor at the Alabama A&M University. He taught several courses on graduate and undergraduate levels which included environmental planning, urban economics, planning theory and studio. He also engaged in workshops and conducted series of research with keen interest in land use and environmental planning practices as well as community food systems. He has also engaged in series of community service appointments, which include the Madison County Natural Hazard Mitigation Committee. He has also given seminars throughout the country, preparing planners to take the certification exam for the American Institute of Certified Planners. In 2010 he won the award for Outstanding Teaching Faculty for the College of Agriculture, Life and Natural Sciences.

Dr. Fricano conducts research in land use and environmental planning and community food systems. He has presented several working papers at conferences and he has also written a number of articles which are pending submittal to peer-review journals. He has also written book reviews for the Journal of the American Planning Association and Urban Studies.

- Which profession interested you more? Professor or City Planner.

Professor Fricano admitted it was a difficult question to answer because he enjoyed the interface between the professional planning and academic environments; each made the other more meaningful. Even after he received his doctoral degree and was working full time at Los Angeles County, he still pursued his research and attended and presented papers at academic conferences. However he enjoys the academic environment because it provides him with more freedom pursue new interests in his teaching and research. He also enjoys the opportunity to share his years of practical experience with students.

continued on page 5
Dr. Miriam Porter serves as the Urban and Regional Studies (URSI) Chair. Her work, while focused on the Institute, often takes her into communities, professional organizations and afar. Last fall she was asked to present at the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), at its national conference in Austin, TX. She presented her research on local government managers in the role of civic educator. Austin brought to life the Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) era of government. The LBJ school of Public Affairs is located there. The former President’s daughter, Lucy, hosted some of the conference events and she had many fun and intriguing stories to share about and LBJ and his presidency.

Dr. Porter has also been part of the team of faculty that teaches the Studio which is the graduate capstone class. The studio students go into the communities to advise and problem solve. The Studio completed projects for Madison Lake, MN, Elko, MN and Albert Lea, MN this past year. These projects help communities but they also help to accomplish goals of the Institute in applied research and preparing “street ready professionals”.

She is also preparing for, along with Dr. Asomani-Boateng, another Ghana field studies with students. This initiative aligns with the University’s strategic priority of Global Solutions. Students also report that it is a life transforming experience.

Miriam continues to Co-Chair the University Planning Committee with the Provost. This committee recommends allocation of up to $500,000 for project proposals which align with the University’s Strategic Priorities and also advises the President on major University contracts and initiatives.

Dr. Porter was honored in the spring by Minnesota State Mankato Greek Community Order of Omega for service “Above and Beyond”.

Raymond Asomani-Boateng is in his tenth year for service “Above and Beyond”.

Faculty Updates

Dr. Porter was honored in the spring by Minnesota University contracts and initiatives. Priorities and also advises the President on major proposals which align with the University’s Strategic mends allocation of up to $500,000 for project Committee with the Provost. This committee recom

Miriam continues to Co-Chair the University Planning Committee with the Provost. This committee recommends allocation of up to $500,000 for project proposals which align with the University’s Strategic Priorities and also advises the President on major University contracts and initiatives.

Dr. Porter was honored in the spring by Minnesota State Mankato Greek Community Order of Omega for service “Above and Beyond”.

Raymond Asomani-Boateng is in his tenth year for service “Above and Beyond”.

Fricano continued from page 4

Public and Private sector- Which of the two is of interest to you

While he notes that he has worked in the public sector for about 20 years, a career in each sector can have equal value. The public sector is more client-oriented and intensive and it polishes you in seeking solutions and interfacing with government officials and the public. However, he also added that as a planner within the public sector, you have the opportunity to look at issues holistically. Your role becomes that of a judge who weighs the merits of a case. It was also gratifying to work with communities and be a problem solver, developing ways to make new development compatible with the surrounding environment.

Describe a particularly memorable, successful project, how it was initiated, and how it was organized among the staff?

Two memorable projects was a permit for the expansion of the Puente Hills Landfill and developing regulations for the Baldwin Hills Oil field near Los Angeles International Airport. “Each was memorable because they were very controversial with some key impacts to be addressed. The Puente Hills Landfill was the largest landfill in the United States. The landfill was applying for a permit to expand its operations. I had to work with the operator and the community to arrive at conditions that would reduce its impacts.”

Dr. Fricano also assisted in the development of a special set of zoning regulations for the Baldwin Hills Oil Field. “The adjacent community expressed concern over health and safety related impacts. So, the Board of Supervisors asked us to develop conditions that would mitigate impacts. Seeing the regulations adopted in 2008 was very gratifying.”

What is their organizational hierarchy – who do they report to? Are they primarily responsible to a City Council, a Commission?

Professor Fricano noted that while at LA County, he was accountable to the County Board of Supervisors who were five in number, with each supervising a very sizable and diverse jurisdiction. Essentially, the planning staff assisted them with planning-related issues in their districts.

What was the most relevant theory you have learnt during your training for the profession, and what should you study to perform this type of job well?

He asserts that social cost theory and externalities was most relevant in training for the profession. He defines externalities as the impact of one party on another that is not priced in the market. When a firm of individual creates an impact but does not compensate the public, they are not paying the full social cost of their action. But the profession. He defines externalities as the impact of one party on another that is not priced in the market. When a firm of individual creates an impact but does not compensate the public, they are not paying the full social cost of their action. But each party has rights which must be respected. When I later developed conditions that mitigated project impacts, I could appreciate the value and appropriateness of tools such as impact fees in resolving development issues.

What advice would you give to students entering this profession?

Professor Fricano noted that while at LA County, he was accountable to the County Board of Supervisors who were five in number, with each supervising a very sizable and diverse jurisdiction. Essentially, the planning staff assisted them with planning-related issues in their districts.

What was the most relevant theory you have learnt during your training for the profession, and what should you study to perform this type of job well?

He asserts that social cost theory and externalities was most relevant in training for the profession. He defines externalities as the impact of one party on another that is not priced in the market. When a firm of individual creates an impact but does not compensate the public, they are not paying the full social cost of their action. But each party has rights which must be respected. When I later developed conditions that mitigated project impacts, I could appreciate the value and appropriateness of tools such as impact fees in resolving development issues.

What advice would you give to students entering this profession?

He believes that walking into an organization with an open mind and accommodating the way the organization operates is a stepping stone towards excelling in this profession. It is too early to introduce change when you are new; but with time, you have added value with the organization. Essentially, this is important for two reasons; first of all, you will become more familiar with some of the issues of the organization and also with time, you will become more accepted and credible. He added that, one should ask questions when needed but there is also an art to listening and being silent. You intervene at the right time to add your input.

How do you handle criticism?

“I handle criticism constructively,” he said. “I use criticism for self-improvement. You can receive positive and negative criticism. Over the years, I have found the words of Coach John Wooden very helpful. According to Wooden, if you want to be successful, you can’t take either positive or negative criticism to an extreme. One must also be able to judge if it is helpful or not. What you gain leads to refinement and growth.”
Faculty Updates

Raymond Asomani-Boateng

at Minnesota State and continues to teach URSI graduate planning courses (Zoning and Legal Issues, Operational Planning, Planning Theory and History and Environmental Planning). For the past five years Raymond has been attending training workshops organized by Government Training Services (GTS) educational events on variances, planning ethics, planning and zoning, urban food systems and home occupations and in November he will be attending 22nd Annual Eastern Boot Camp on Environmental Law in Washington D.C. As part of URSIs global outreach Raymond is putting together a course on International Planning which will be open to both American and international students interested in pursuing careers in international planning.

Raymond has also been busy with his research project on waste; he has added a new area to his research, examining the destruction of urban wetlands in Ghana. Raymond will present his research on urban wetland destruction in a conference paper at the forthcoming Wisconsin Wetland Association conference in February 2014. As part of URSIs global outreach Raymond is putting together a course on International Planning which will be open to both American and international students interested in pursuing careers in international planning.

An Exceptional Experience

By Lindy Crawford, Graduate Student

In May, I packed up my things and moved to Mound, MN for the summer to begin an internship that would change my life. The Lake Minnetonka area was somewhat new to me and I had no idea what to expect, especially working with a fire department. In the past I had searched for city management and planning internships not specializing in a specific department. I jump-started my internship by attending the 2013 MCMA Conference with City Manager, Kandis Hanson.

I quickly found that working with the Mound Fire Department was going to be an exceptional experience for me. Due to my past internship experience and previous courses completed at the Urban and Regional Studies Institute I was assigned a large task—to update the department’s 200+ policies, procedures, operating guidelines, and job descriptions. It was through this large-scale project that I began to see the importance of volunteer firefighters and just how hard they work to serve their community.

On June 1st, I witnessed first hand how much the citizens of the Lake Minnetonka area support the Mound Fire Department. The 62nd Annual MFD Fish Fry and Dance was a hit! The firefighters and their spouses set up the entire event and served nearly 3,000 meals. This event is something that the department and citizens look forward to each year. Funds from the previous 2012 Fish Fry were used to purchase needed tools and equipment.

Accepting the Mound Fire Department internship allowed me to learn about the day-to-day work of a fire department and how unpredictable each day can be. I have gained many knowledgeable skills and the understanding that working together and communication is essential to a healthy work environment. All of the laughs and memories I made with new friends is something I will never forget. The Mound Fire Department is an example of a city department that truly cares about the success of not only their department and staff members but also each citizen they encounter.

Raymond Asomani-Boateng

An Exceptional Experience

By Lindy Crawford, Graduate Student

In May, I packed up my things and moved to Mound, MN for the summer to begin an internship that would change my life. The Lake Minnetonka area was somewhat new to me and I had no idea what to expect, especially working with a fire department. In the past I had searched for city management and planning internships not specializing in a specific department. I jump-started my internship by attending the 2013 MCMA Conference with City Manager, Kandis Hanson.

I quickly found that working with the Mound Fire Department was going to be an exceptional experience for me. Due to my past internship experience and previous courses completed at the Urban and Regional Studies Institute I was assigned a large task—to update the department’s 200+ policies, procedures, operating guidelines, and job descriptions. It was through this large-scale project that I began to see the importance of volunteer firefighters and just how hard they work to serve their community.

On June 1st, I witnessed first hand how much the citizens of the Lake Minnetonka area support the Mound Fire Department. The 62nd Annual MFD Fish Fry and Dance was a hit! The firefighters and their spouses set up the entire event and served nearly 3,000 meals. This event is something that the department and citizens look forward to each year. Funds from the previous 2012 Fish Fry were used to purchase needed tools and equipment.

Accepting the Mound Fire Department internship allowed me to learn about the day-to-day work of a fire department and how unpredictable each day can be. I have gained many knowledgeable skills and the understanding that working together and communication is essential to a healthy work environment. All of the laughs and memories I made with new friends is something I will never forget. The Mound Fire Department is an example of a city department that truly cares about the success of not only their department and staff members but also each citizen they encounter.
Faculty Updates

Mitchell Berg grew up in the Twin Cities area and has earned both a B.A. and an M.A. in Urban and Regional Studies. In fact, Mitch completed his Master’s degree here at the Urban and Regional Studies Institute, back in 2000. Mitch is also studying at Hamline University to obtain his doctoral degree in Public Administration. He teaches Community Leadership, Public Information, Economic Development, and Administrative Services. Prior to Minnesota State Mankato, Mitch worked as a city administrator in several Minnesota communities, including serving as the City Administrator of Mahnomen, Minnesota. According to Berg, “What made working for Mahnomen challenging and unique was that the city itself, was a Minnesota Statutory city, but was entirely enveloped within the sovereign boundary of the White Earth Nation.” Berg also worked for two years in the Minnesota House of Representatives’ Office of the Chief Clerk.

In addition, to teaching Berg is an active member of the ICMA, MNOCA, and MAMA. He also serves on the LMC Annual Conference Planning Committee and MNCMA Education and Outreach committee. Berg is also the president-elect to the University of Minnesota Duluth Alumni Board and is a member of the Argosy University Advisory Board.

Professor Mitch Berg

Interview by Martin Akomea

Professional background:
Professor Berg has 11 years of experience as a City Administrator for a number of communities in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. In addition, he has worked at the Minnesota House of Representatives for slightly over two years in the Office of the Chief Clerk. He holds a B.A. in Urban and Regional Studies from University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) and a M.A. in Urban Studies from Minnesota State University Mankato. Currently, he is taking courses toward a Doctorate in Public Administration at Hamline University.

How did you come to this job? I began as an adjunct instructor, while I was a City Administrator. Over the years, I have taught courses at Minnesota State University, Mankato, Bemidji State University, and Argosy University. In addition, for the past decade I have been active with the UMD Alumni Association and have really gained a sense of fulfillment in giving back to my alma mater. I see teaching as a great opportunity to help train the next set of public servants.

Whenever I enter a classroom I am instantly inspired. Therefore, there is no doubt in my mind that I have a new passion in teaching. Nevertheless, I do miss some of the profession. This is why I am still very active with several different local, state and national organizations for professional administrators, those being the International City Management Association (ICMA), Minnesota City County Management Association (MCMCA), Metro Administration Managers Association (MAMA), and the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC).
Beth Heidelberg

In 2012-2013, Beth Heidelberg has focused on creating a center for historic preservation policy training through URSI. She has pilot tested a new course, “Historic Preservation Field Methods and Policy,” and has recently received approval to launch the new class at the graduate level. The course focuses on the laws, policies, and survey methodology local governments will encounter in their preservation efforts.

Additionally, Heidelberg has been assisting Bob Hugg in preparing a self-study report of the URSI department in preparation for accreditation review. And after years of administrative studies, online course development, and course restructuring to focus more heavily on regulatory practices, Heidelberg has been able to return to research, and received a grant to study local government policies and practices in communities who are famous for notorious or tragic histories (see article in this issue).

Planning for Ghosts: the Haunting of Local Government Policy

Whether you believe in the misty, paranormal apparitions of popular culture or not, ghosts are everywhere. URSI professor Beth Heidelberg chased ghosts in the Pullman neighborhood of Chicago, where the paternalistic planned community permeated the lives of Pullman Palace Car Company workers until they reached their boiling point in 1894, and to Salem, Massachusetts, where the infamous Salem Witch Trials gripped the town in 1692.

The goal of the study was to determine what, if any, these notorious and tragic events play in modern local government practices, how the community portrays its history to visitors, and whether there are trends and methods that other cities could be inspired by when trying to manage their own notorious pasts.

The visits to Salem and Pullman revealed the importance of the visitor experience; getting people to the site, educating them about the event without exploiting the victims or being judgmental about how events transpired, accommodating visitors and along the lines of Planner’s network and Advocacy Planning. Specifically, the reason I am in Michigan is that my wife has been hired to work with a private biotech corporation.

My plan is to use this opportunity as a retired planner to offer my services in the following areas

1. Urban Agriculture around the U.S. Urban neighborhoods (especially Detroit’s) have converted abandoned housing lots to garden plots and thereby provides fresh vegetables to residents and to occupy empty lots.

2. Housing Rehabilitation – working with non-profit housing corporations volunteer planners and citizens have joined together to connect abandoned housing sites into renovated livable housing following the Habitat for Humanity model.

As a result, I am using this forum of the URSI Newsletter to call upon volunteer planners and students from Urban and Regional Studies Institute at Minnesota State University, Mankato to contact me and express your interest in these two project areas and to work as a team in Urban Agriculture and Housing Rehabilitation. With your help this can be an exciting opportunity to implement planning advocacy and “planners’ network” projects.

If you are interested in such a project during Spring Break (March or May) 2014 please contact me at 612-220-4481, or email Laverny-Rafter@earthlink.net.

Sincerely,

David
Faculty Updates

Heidelberg continued from page 8

residents, and the importance of partnerships with local organizations and nonprofits who can focus their energies on education and interpretation – something the local government unit would otherwise have to squeeze in to their already full list of duties.

Managing ghosts, as demonstrated by this pilot study, seems to be successful when the city doesn’t go it alone, when they have active, trusted local organizations to work with. The city also has greater control over the message being conveyed to the public when it owns at least one property associated with the event, or property that is used as a museum/interpretive center. In Salem, this was especially important, as many private businesses used the witchcraft theme as kitsch and a curiosity, rather than as an educational opportunity; although these private businesses should be fully acknowledged as part of the heritage tourism draw to Salem.

Planning for Ghosts will test these findings in future investigations. Heidelberg confronted the Salem and Pullman ghosts, but as anyone who has watched paranormal research shows on basic cable, there are thousands more out there to investigate.

Mission Accomplished…for Now

Urban Studies Leadership Endowment

Over the past few years the Urban & Regional Studies Institute has been engaged in fundraising to match a grant total of $45,000 promised by Peter & Linda Dahm upon successfully matching the challenge. This fundraising endeavor was guided by the Urban Studies Leadership Council consisting of Alumni Peter Dahm and his wife Linda, Dr. Tony Filipowitch, Professor Emeritus Perry Wood as well as other alumni, Dr. Robert Streeter, Lisa Hughes, and Lindy Crawford who is also a current graduate student. The Council is chaired by Dr. Miriam Porter and efforts were facilitated by Dr. Susan Taylor, SBS Development Director, Missy Mandefeld, URSI Office Manager and SURSI’s president Andrew Andrusko.

Thanks to this committed team of people and many people and organizations who contributed, the Urban Studies Leadership fund endowment has accumulated over $100,000. The mission was accomplished. Earned income was used in the past year to award internship stipends for three graduate students Owusua Yamoah, Lindy Crawford and Bill Mettee.

We have successfully reached one leg of the goal. The Leadership Council has looked into the needed endowment to fund a full year assistantship for one graduate student. Approximately $350,000 is needed. This longer term goal while ambitious is reachable. In the future we will again look to our alumni and friends to invest in the next generation.

Tony has been doing some dynamite work!
Why I Chose URSI

As a new faculty member, I am very grateful to be part of the Urban and Research Studies Institute. I would like to use this article as a way to formally greet my new colleagues, the faculty, and our support staff and students and to let you all know why I chose URSI as my new academic home.

Having served as a planner for Los Angeles County and later as a professor at Alabama A&M University, my career has given me a perspective in the academic and professional environment. I have enjoyed this interface which I find very complementary. URSI features a program that encourages and maintains this same synergy.

I also look forward to pursuing three things I enjoy most as a faculty member: applying my experience in the classroom, engaging in outreach and pursuing creative research. This reflects what is happening on campus; Minnesota State Mankato fosters a positive environment that encourages creativity. I sensed this during my interview and more recently in the Big Ideas campaign and promotion of undergraduate research. Minnesota State Mankato and URSI also provide state of the art resources. This includes the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, telepresence and distance learning technology, D2L Smart Classrooms and an exceptional library, which I look forward to using.

I also feel URSI is well positioned to address major planning issues in its outreach efforts. Studio and internships programs bridge the gap between experience and education. This also includes collaborative efforts that extend URSI’s outreach globally such as the Ghana partnership program.

An effective planning program depends upon an environment conducive to planning. Minnesota has become one the leading states promoting growth management and the preservation of agricultural land. The Minnesota Agricultural Land Preservation Act has developed a program of agricultural preserves maintained by effective financial incentives, land use regulations and planning-based programs. In addition, the City of Minneapolis has taken the lead in developing sustainability indicators and the coalition of Greater Minnesota cities also facilitates these practices throughout the state. As Minnesota serves as an example of effective planning, it is also fertile ground for research. There is so much happening in our own backyard that we can write about!

An environment conducive to planning also exists within the vicinity of the campus. The City of Mankato is growing but its citizens are also aware of the importance of maintaining a balance between economic growth, environmental and social issues. The City has taken important initiatives in its “green” policies and best practices in planning for sustainability. It also provides facilities such as business parks conducive to economic growth. A variety of social services are provided both by government and non-profit organizations.

In closing, successful planning programs are not static. As the Mankato community and university continue to grow, URSI grows as well. URSI provides leadership and an important resource of scholars and alumni who shape the urban planning and urban management fields. I look forward to extending its mission.

Russell J. Fricano, Ph.D., AICP
On July 24th, I had the opportunity to defend my thesis "Towards New Urbanist Student Housing: A Comparative Pro forma Analysis of Private Mixed-Use Housing and University-Owned Housing." I was fortunate to have wonderful supervisors for the thesis, Dr. Anthony Filipovitch and Dr. Beth Heidelberg. Their constant encouragement and support has helped me complete the ambitious thesis.

New Urbanism is a modern planning movement which encourages mixed-use development in order to address sprawl. Metropolitan areas have a lot of examples of mixed-use developments. Universities, as an important urban element, have started to incorporate New Urbanist design principles on campus. The thesis was an endeavor to study the prospect of adopting these principles by studying the financial aspect of mixed-use housing for students in Minnesota State Mankato. For comparison, financial data of one private mixed-use development, the new mixed-use project by Tailwind group on Warren Street, has been compared with Julia Sears Residence Community. Finally, Julia Sears was assumed a mixed-use to determine its economic feasibility.

In the three pro forma models, rent required per square feet is obtained. The value is higher for Julia Sears Residence Community than the Tailwind’s mixed-use. However, the pro forma shows that if Julia Sears was mixed-use, rent required per square feet is less. The amount saved can be used for the benefits of students including subsidizing room and board fees. This implies that along with having environmental benefits from the mixed-use developments, it is also economically beneficial.

People from different sectors came to see the finding of the research. Guests present in the defense were Paul Vogel, Community Development Director of City of Mankato, Kyle Smith, Director of Strategic Development of Tailwind Group, Marilyn Wells, Minnesota State Mankato Provost, and Richard Wheeler, Assistant Director of Residential Life. My supervisors, Dr. Anthony Filipovitch and Dr. Beth Heidelberg were also there. Supervisors and the guests introduced themselves and Dr. Filipovitch had given a brief overview of my thesis. Following my presentation, there was very interesting discussion on the research. Questions were based on the location of the proposed mixed-use residence, which commercial uses to be included and most importantly, overall impact of the new development.

Overall, the journey of my thesis has ended successfully leaving scope for further studies in the future. Mixed-use campus residence is not common in the US yet. But it is certainly the trend of the future as with leaders such as Washington University in St. Louis, University of Pennsylvania and Ohio State University. Minnesota State University also can follow this trend by incorporating the New Urbanist design principles. The research will be a platform for my future research.
Getting them in touch and keeping in touch with the Institute.

URSI Roster Update

Help us update our URSI Roster and mailing list by completing the following information and returning it to: Elizabeth Manderfeld, Urban & Regional Studies Institute, Minnesota State University, Mankato, 106 Morris Hall, Mankato, MN 56001 or fax it to 507-389-6377 or email to elizabeth.manderfeld@mnsu.edu. Thanks.

NAME: _______________________________________________________________________________________________________

TITLE: _______________________________________________________________________________________________________

COMPANY NAME: ______________________________________________________________________________________________

COMPANY ADDRESS: ___________________________________________________________________________________________

HOME ADDRESS: _______________________________________________________________________________________________

EMAIL: _______________________________________________________________________________________________________

I AM A: [ ] ALUMNI - YEAR GRADUATED: ________, DEGREE: ___________________________________________________________
[ ] FRIEND OF URSI
[ ] CURRENT STUDENT

I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION ON:
[ ] SERVING AS A PROFESSIONAL MENTOR
[ ] PROVIDING AN INTERNSHIP
[ ] CONTRIBUTING TO THE URSI DEVELOPMENT FUND AT THE MINNESOTA STATE FOUNDATION (tax deductible)
[ ] CONTRIBUTING TO THE BARRETT ENDOWMENT (tax deductible)
[ ] CONTRIBUTING TO THE SMITH ENDOWMENT (tax deductible)

THANK YOU!