As I step down from the URSI Director position, after completing my three year term, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the many URSI alumni who have offered their time and assistance to the Institute. For me, the most enjoyable feature of the director position is that it brings you into closer contact with URSI alumni and other urban practitioners. This experience has renewed my respect for the difficult challenges that they face. As an academic, it is easy to become very specialized in one area and neglect the broad range of issues facing cities and towns. Practitioners do not have this luxury and on a daily basis they must be “expert” at everything from managing city council meetings to economic development to land use planning, just to name a few.

The mission of URSI has always been to train generalists who are flexible and capable of responding to the wide range of demands that are faced by urban professionals: Now I have an even greater appreciation of the importance of that mission. Good luck and stay in touch - I can be reached at david.laverny-rafter@mnsu.edu.

Mentoring Program Offered by URSI Alumni

Advice is something college students are used to getting but rarely do they have an opportunity to get it from professionals in their field of study. That’s why URSI alumni Bob Streetar decided to continue a program originally started by Bob Barrett, founder of the Urban Studies program at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Streetar was one of the many students who used the mentoring program during his career at MSU and after the death of Professor Barrett, he realized what a valuable opportunity this presented to students. He and co-coordinator Anita Rasmussen reestablished the program in the fall semester of 2000. The program pairs current graduate and undergraduate students with URSI alumni currently working in the public sector. The alumni offer students advice on which classes may be most valuable to the career path that they plan to pursue as well as other valuable advice on working in the public sector. The program is currently serving 15 to 20 students of both the URSI department at MSU and St. Cloud State University’s community development program. If you wish to serve as a mentor, please contact Robert Streetar at 952-939-8285 or he can be reached via e-mail at the following address: rstteetar@ci.minnetonka.mn.us
Alumni Contributions are Put to Good Use Supporting URSI Students and Faculty

Because of the generous contributions of URSI alumni to the URSI account at the MSU Foundation, several new scholarship and grant programs have been initiated in URSI. These funds have made a critical difference in helping URSI pursue excellence in urban education, research, and service. The specific Foundation-supported programs now in operation are:

1. **Undergraduate Achievement Award**: These awards consist of $1,000 each and are granted to outstanding URSI students who have demonstrated excellence in two or more of the following areas: academic achievement, community service, leadership, research.

2. **Undergraduate Book Awards**: These awards of $100 each are granted to undergraduate URSI majors who have maintained a GPA of 3.00 or better and who are in need of assistance in purchasing books or supplies.

3. **Graduate Scholarships**: These awards of $1,500 are used to cover tuition costs for outstanding URSI graduate students.

4. **Student Conference Attendance**: Annually, $100 awards are provided to undergraduate and graduate students to partially cover expenses related to attending a professional management or planning conference.

5. **Faculty Development**: Foundation funds are used to supplement university funds to support faculty with costs related to research, technology, presenting papers at professional conferences, etc.

6. **Technology**: Foundation funds are used to supplement university funds and purchase additional computer hardware and software.

So, thanks to all the URSI alums for their continued support. See the check-off sheet at the end of the newsletter for more information on how you can make a tax-deductible contribution to URSI.

Madison, WI Field Trip Involves Humphrey Institute and URSI Students

In February 2001, a new approach to the traditional student field trip was implemented. This year, nine graduate planning students from the Humphrey Institute of the University of Minnesota and eight URSI graduate students joined together to visit an out-of-state city (Madison, WI), meet with professional planners, and see examples of new development and urban redevelopment. Specifically, the students heard about new planning strategies by meeting with Mark Olinger, the Madison Planning Director, Jeanne Sieling, the Dane County Planning Director as well as visiting sites such as Middleton Hills (the New Urbanist development) and seeing plans for the new downtown Civic Center. The students from the Humphrey Institute and URSI shared housing and socialized so it was a good opportunity for them to get to know each other and hear about the two programs. Finally, the planning program at the University of Wisconsin hosted the visiting students and faculty at a local pub and shared their perspectives on planning in the Madison area.

The joint field trip was organized by Professor David Laverny-Rafter of URSI and Professor Ann Markusen, the Director of the Humphrey Institute’s Planning Program. Since it went well and was appreciated by all involved, it may be continued in the future focusing on different out-of-state cities. The URSI students involved were: Aaron Jones, John Glomski, Jim Mangan, Lisa Krause, Mark Konz, David Moe, Vicki Sanville, and Morgan Case.
Alumni News

- Kathy Bailey is currently the city manager for the City of Sherburn, Minnesota.
- Jessica Crary, a 1999 URSI alumnus, left to serve in the Peace Corps earlier this year. She is working as a bookkeeper in rural Zimbabwe for an organization that cares for children orphaned by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa.
- Aaron Parrish is currently serving as the economic development coordinator for the City of Moundsview, Minnesota. He can be reached at: aaronp@cmnet.org
- Martin Schultz is currently working as the development review planner for the Monroe County Planning Department in Tavernier, Florida. He can be reached at martindav@hotmail.com
- Matthew Weiland is currently employed as the city planner for the city of Hastings, Minnesota. He can be reached at: mweiland@ci.hastings.mn.us

Students in the News

- Anna Thill is currently serving as student director on the Minnesota Planning Association Board of Directors. She can be e-mailed at: annathill@hotmail.com
- Karla Vita is currently working with the city manager of the City of Faribault, Minnesota.
- Ryan Kragerud has been working on Main Streets throughout Minnesota. Recently, he accepted a job with the Longmont, Colorado Planning Department. He can be reached at: ryanjon@hotmail.com

Visit and See the Improvements to the URSI Web Page

With the continued growth of the Internet, an organization’s Web site has become an exceedingly crucial part of informing interested parties about an organization. This need has been recognized by URSI and it has made some significant changes to the department’s Web site. The most exciting change has been the alumni and prospective student sections. This new addition allows URSI alumni to keep in touch with the department, to update their contact information, and find contact information for fellow alumni. Please note that first time users will be assigned a unique username and password the first time they choose to use the registry but will be able to change it to their liking later. This is strictly for security reasons. It also contains a section for prospective students seeking more information about the program. Prospective students can fill out a short form in order to request that more information about the program be mailed to them. The Web site address is: http://www.mnsu.edu/dept/ursi

“Dr. J” Receives Grant to Expand Mankato Field Walk

Dr. Janet Cherrington-Cucore, or “Dr. J.” as her students call her, has recently received a $5,000 grant from MnSCU and the Bush foundation to incorporate new technology into her Mankato field walk program. The grant money will provide several digital cameras for the program, which will allow the students to take pictures during the tour and later upload them to the homepage of the virtual walking tour of Mankato. It will also provide for workshops to train students in the use of PowerPoint, digital cameras, FrontPage, and other software used to maintain the Mankato virtual walking tour.
URSI Receives Three Prestigious H.U.D. Fellowships

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has granted URSI three fellowships that will be offered to new graduate students in urban planning and management beginning in the fall term of 2001. The fellowships are two-year awards, which cover all tuition and academic expenses, offer a stipend of $12 per hour, and cover student expenses related to attending a national professional conference. All H.U.D. Fellows will work part-time in a local government department or in a non-profit community organization while they pursue their full-time graduate studies in URSI.

URSI has been honored to receive the H.U.D. Fellowships for several years and since they are very competitive, they represent a national recognition of the quality of the URSI graduate programs.

Graduate Students Complete Studio Projects

As part of the URSI Fall 2000 planning studio, MA candidates Paula Carpenter, Kim Depree, John Hinzman, Julie Hoium, Amy Knox, Ryan Kragerud, Amy Nelson, Patrick Rew, Dan Taylor, Anna Thill, and Greg Wagner developed a downtown and revitalization plan for the City of Waseca, Minnesota. This “hands-on” advanced planning course, under the supervision of Dr. David Laverny-Rafter, Dr. H. Roger Smith, and Dr. Perry Wood, allows students to apply their knowledge of the discipline’s methodology learned in the classroom to a “real-world” research project. Included in this study was a Visual Preference Survey, downtown and commercial inventories utilizing the North American Industrial Classification System, and application of the National Trust Main Street Center’s Four Point Main Street Approach for enhancing and revitalizing the downtown economy. Studio members presented the plan to the Waseca City Council in December.

The vision for the plan was to create and maintain a thriving downtown for Waseca that provided necessary and desirable services to its citizens and visitors. In addition, this effort will identify general concepts to be incorporated into a working downtown and commercial revitalization plan that will enhance the quality and character of downtown Waseca. Analysis will include identifying a specific market niche for the downtown and land use and impact study for and around the proposed Minnesota Highway 14 corridor.

Professor Perry Wood leads a student field trip.
URSI Promotes Geographic Information System (GIS) Competency

Due to the significance of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in urban management and planning, URSI has established a joint agreement with the Geography Department at Minnesota State University to enhance the GIS skills of URSI graduates. While URSI has offered GIS courses in the past taught by adjunct faculty, this agreement provides a formal program of GIS offerings from introduction courses to advanced practicums. Under the agreement, the Geography department will offer a “GIS for Planners” course and it will make its GIS Lab available to URSI for workshops and student course work. In return, URSI will be sponsoring an annual GIS Workshop for undergraduate and graduate students to ensure they have the basic knowledge and skills needed to take the GIS for Planners course, jointly (with Geography) offer an advanced GIS practicum, and help support the expansion of the hardware and software in the GIS lab.

“This joint effort by URSI and Geography represents a creative solution for ensuring that our students are well prepared in GIS while minimizing duplication” says Dean Susan Coultrap-McQuin. URSI hopes that it provides a model for joint interdisciplinary efforts in other areas such as environmental planning and transportation.

Faculty Notes

• Dr. Janet Cherrington-Cucore has recently presented a paper written by herself and Dr. Debra Gohagan of the department of social work on her use of technology to integrate college students into the communities in which they live. Her primary example is that of her Mankato Virtual Walking Tour project. This paper was presented at a virtual conference held exclusively online by The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning. She also plans to present the paper at an international conference at the University of North Dakota in June. In service to the department, she has retooled the department Web site. In service to her profession, she is a member of the research committee of the Minnesota League of Cities. She can be reached at janet.cherrington-cucore@mnsu.edu.

• Dr. Bill Bernhagen has recently completed his study of sustainable communities in the U.S. and Canada and he continues to foster the growth of the service-learning program on campus. His research was the focus of a “Frontier Forum” presentation on campus attended by over 100 faculty and students. He is now focusing on the creation of a non-profit leadership certificate program offered as a collaboration of a number of departments with students enrolled in the program taking various classes in each department. He can be reached at william.bernhagen@mnsu.edu.

• Dr. Miriam Porter recently presented a study entitled, “Making Cities Livable” at an international conference in Savannah, Georgia held in March. The conference paper was on Local Government Managers and the Role of Civic Education Practice in Action. In service to the department, she is supervising the program review activities. She can be reached at miriam.porter@mnsu.edu.
Dr. David Laverny-Rafter is completing his last year as Director of the Institute. He has also been employed as Evaluation Coordinator for MnSCU’s Center for Teaching and Learning where he conducts evaluation research and provides technical assistance to faculty in program evaluation and assessment. Other research that he has been conducting includes comparative analysis of how Canadian and U.S. cities are implementing sustainability planning and the use of transit as a central element in planning for livable cities and suburbs. Over the last year, he has made numerous conference presentations and serves as President of Transit for Livable Communities, Inc. He can be reached at david.laverny-rafter@mnsu.edu.

Dr. H. Roger Smith has continued to teach courses in urban design, historic preservation, and downtown revitalization. In the last year, he has supervised two graduate planning studios. In the fall, the students completed a study of downtown revitalization in Waseca and in

Bernhagen, Laverny-Rafter Receive Twenty-second “Frontier Forum” Award

Professors Bill Bernhagen and David Laverny-Rafter received the twenty-second annual “Frontier Forum” Award in recognition of their research project that examined sustainable communities in Canada. Sustainability has been defined as planning to meet the needs of current residents without undermining the resources and environmental needs of future generations. Funded by the Canadian government, the study focused on the Canadian cities of Vancouver, Montreal, Calgary, and Ottawa. The results were not universally enthusiastic but all of the cities are at least making some progress toward the vision of sustainability. Vancouver has one of the best records overall in regards to planning for sustainability. Ottawa also has effectively linked infrastructure and development (e.g. transportation) to make it a sustainable community. Montreal and Calgary, on the other hand, have not had the best track record in regards to sustainability planning. Montreal has only recently experienced community involvement in the push for sustainable planning but it is hoped that this interest will continue and shape future planning for Montreal. Calgary is currently experimenting with sustainable planning in its suburb of McKenzie Towne. Some of the experiences in the McKenzie Towne suburb have led to the partial implementation of sustainability planning but those experiences have contributed

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Professors Laverny-Rafter and Bernhagen presents “Frontier Forum” lecture at MSU.
the spring, the students examined campus parking and transportation issues. Next year, Dr. Smith will begin his first year of a phased retirement. He can be reached at h.smith@mnsu.edu.

- Dr. Perry Wood has continued his service to the department by co-supervising the studio projects. This fall he oversaw the development of a downtown revitalization plan for the City of Waseca. In January 2001, he began serving as director of the Center for Applied Social Research of the MSU College of Social and Behavioral Science. He can be reached at: perry.wood@mnsu.edu.

Faculty Notes - Continued from pg. 6

“Frontier Forum” Award - Continued from pg. 6

to an atmosphere of learning from what works and what does not work. The conclusions reached in this work are that cities must create a sustainability vision, must organize citizen participation, and achieve cooperation between various municipalities and government entities. Finally, cities must pay attention to the quality of life issues that the citizens bring up in order to ensure that the city will continue successful sustainability planning.

The Frontier Forum Award is granted by the MSU College of Social and Behavioral Sciences to outstanding research and included a formal presentation to over 100 faculty and students on March 20. If you would like a copy of the research report, contact Bill Bernhagen at william.bernhagen@mnsu.edu.
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: Rita McEvoy, Urban and Regional Studies Institute, Minnesota State University, Mankato, 106 Morris Hall, Mankato, MN 56001 or fax it to 507-389-6377 or e-mail to rita.mcevoy@mnsu.edu. Thanks.

NAME: ______________________________________________________________________________________________

TITLE: ______________________________________________________________________________________________

WORK NAME AND ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________

TEL.: ( _______ )___________________________________ FAX: ( _______ ) ___________________________________

E-MAIL: _____________________________________________________________________________________________

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 MSU FOUNDATION (tax deductible)
[   ] CONTRIBUTING TO THE BARRETT ENDOWMENT (tax deductible)

THANK YOU!