CRED CELEBRATES ITS INAUGURAL YEAR

The Department’s new Certificate in Real Estate Development (CRED) Program had a successful first year. The CRED program, which is designed to provide aspiring real estate developers and city planners with the skills needed to initiate, navigate, and manage real estate development projects, enrolled 17 students who completed the first two courses in the Fall of 2013 and Spring 2014. These 17 students come from a variety educational and professional backgrounds: 8 are existing MUP students earning the credential as part of their masters degrees, while 9 are currently working in a variety of professional fields: affordable housing development, architecture, commercial brokerage, environmental economics, landscape architecture, and urban planning.

The first course of the CRED program – URBP 205: Private Development and Urban Planning – was offered in the Fall 2013 semester. The students took part in the intensive Urban Land Institute’s UrbanPlan training exercise. Groups of 5 students competed to win support from a mock city council for a hypothetical public-private partnership redevelopment project. The second course – URBP 207: Real Estate Development Business and Planning – was offered in the Spring 2014 semester. The course was co-taught by Ellis Berns, (former Economic Development director, City of Mountain View,) and CRED Director, Prof. Ralph McLaughlin. The culminating project required students to complete an Entitlement Feasibility Report for an actual for-sale project.

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Alumni and Friends,

This year has been an exciting one for our department. We just completed the first full year of our CRED program and received university approval for four additional advanced certificate programs. MUP Alumnus Scott Lefaver received the Outstanding Alumnus award from the College of Social Sciences, while Mark Lazzarini was recognized as the Department’s Outstanding Alumnus this year. Our students also received recognition, winning an Award of Merit at this year’s APA California, Northern Section annual awards ceremony for their work in the Spartan-Keyes neighborhood of central San José. It was great to see so many MUP alumni also receiving awards at this event.

We continue to focus on community planning in the program. As our Practitioner-in-Residence Rick Kos, AICP, notes, “Our MUP students never fail to serve as good ‘ambassadors’ for contemporary urban planning practices in the studio courses offered by our program, and I am so proud to work with...”
Instructor Rick Kos, AICP, and seven graduate students started the work of producing a “Voice of the Community” report for the Greater Washington neighborhood. The objective of the report is to highlight the results of a listening tour that was designed, organized, and executed by the student team. Specifically, the students hosted four community meetings and worked directly with local residents at a community-wide Sustainability Fair. At each of these five events, the students diligently documented the primary concerns and aspirations of Greater Washington neighborhood residents. This document will serve as a comprehensive reference for current and future residents to lobby for the changes they seek by sharing this report with foundation program officers, City officials and staff, and fellow community members.

The research within this report builds upon the preliminary community-building work completed by Instructor Fernando Burga and his ten graduate students as part of a Community Assessment course in Fall 2013. The students examined topics including healthy lifestyles, walkability and pedestrian activity, informal retail, affordable housing, and local schools.

The students and faculty who participated in these two semesters of work represent the university component of CommUniverCity San José, an organization that, as the name implies, brings together the skills, knowledge and resources of the community (Greater Washington residents/leaders), the university (the graduate student teams), and the City of San José’s staff.
The Collaborative Neighborhood Planning (CNP) model guided our community work this semester. Contemporary planners who advocate this model believe in the antithesis of government-directed, “top-down” planning techniques and employ the CNP model because it places primary emphasis on the expertise, energy, and enthusiasm available from local residents who are empowered to shape their own community improvement priorities. Therefore, the role of the graduate student planning team was to implement the CNP model and facilitate active discussions and goal-directed workshops with Greater Washington community members. The finished report will be ready for distribution in late summer, 2014 and available at www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/communityplanning/index.html.

Twelve graduate students and their instructor, Rick Kos, AICP, provided substantial planning services to the non-profit Sustainable San Mateo County (SSMC). Each year, SSMC produces a Sustainability Indicators Report to highlight progress that the county’s jurisdictions are making towards achieving a more environmentally sound and equitable county. The 2014 Sustainability Indicators Report focuses on transportation as this year’s key indicator.

MUP students fanned out across the county, each team in charge of studying a portion of El Camino Real, a major thoroughfare that runs from San Francisco to San Jose. The corridor is the focus of numerous Grand Boulevard Initiative efforts to turn El Camino into a mixed-use, transit-served, complete street.
Each team photographed evidence of tangible progress that the El Camino communities are already making towards these goals. Each team also prepared detailed photo captions to link the photos to specific Grand Boulevard Initiative objectives.

Overall, the students’ work conveys the message that even though it will take decades to realize the full potential of the corridor, even now we can catch glimpses of the future in the small steps that have already been taken: a widened sidewalk and pedestrian-scaled lighting in one town, striped bike lanes in another nearby community, transit-oriented developments sprouting in many places along El Camino.

In June, SSMC unveiled an interactive website (www.sustainablesanmateo.org/home/indicators/report/key-indicator/sjsu-project/) featuring the photos and captions prepared by the students. This material will play a prominent role in educating county residents about El Camino’s present and future from a transportation and land use sustainability standpoint.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:
KEVIN RILEY, MUP ‘88

Kevin Riley, Director of Planning and Inspection for the City of Santa Clara, earned his Masters of Urban Planning from SJSU in 1988, with a focus in Urban Design. He was an intern with the City of Santa Clara while in school, and was employed full-time as an Assistant Planner before he graduated. He felt lucky to have had the opportunity to move up through the ranks at the City of Santa Clara over the years, from his start as a planning intern to Assistant, Associate, Senior, Principal, and finally Director of Planning and Inspection. Being with the City for so long has allowed Kevin to be a part of many important projects including Rivermark Community, Kaiser Hospital, Oracle Campus, Levi Stadium, and the development of other big-name technology campuses located in the area. He describes Santa Clara as a cool “big-small city” with many big opportunities in addition to a great community feel.

Kevin is glad he chose to attend SJSU, as the program was very practical and allowed him to hone his planning skills in the classroom at the same time as in the workplace. The combined workplace and classroom experience was very important to his career, and provided a great platform for a deeper understanding of planning. When asked about specific courses or projects that were beneficial to his career, Kevin mentioned that he enjoyed the urban design classes most because they were easily applicable to his career, and the professors in the program were insightful, encouraging and inspirational. Their practical knowledge and background gave credibility to the lessons learned in the program.

Regarding pressing issues in the Bay Area now and in the future, Kevin believes that planners will continually have to deal with the demand for housing as well as the challenge of transitioning suburban communities into urbanized areas to deal with population growth. There will always be resistance to this type of development, as is already noticeable along the El Camino Real corridor, but the
…continued from page 1 (CRED)

In addition to these courses, the CRED program also hosted two symposiums. The first, held in April 2013, was entitled, “The Future Real Estate Needs of the Tech Industry in the Bay Area,” and consisted of speakers from Google and Twitter discussing their vision and space needs over the coming decades. The second symposium, held in April 2014, was entitled, “Taking it to the Streets: Place-Making Comes to Silicon Valley,” and consisted of representatives from Santana Row and Centennial Gateway projects, as well as elected officials and planning representatives from the City of San Jose and Santa Clara.

For the 2014-2015 academic year, the program will expand its offerings to the full four courses. In addition to URBP 205 and 207, the final two courses - URBP 206: Market Analysis, Appraisal, and Finance of Real Estate Development and URBP 208: Urban Real Estate Development Studio - will be offered in the Fall and Spring semesters, respectively. For more information on the CRED program, please contact Prof. Ralph McLaughlin at ralph.mclaughlin@sjsu.edu.

…continued from page 4 (Alumni Spotlight)

combination of good transportation options and affordability has the potential to drastically improve the quality of life in the Bay Area.

Kevin also offered some important advice for current students and recent graduates of the MUP program. He explained that it is so important to get as much experience as you can in a variety of disciplines to build a great knowledge-base. Because everything in planning is so intertwined, it is important to expand your breadth of knowledge not only to compete in the marketplace, but to understand the difficulties that are facing our society. He mentioned that students should take advantage of all the opportunities that are available to them for this very reason.

~ Author, Denise Russell, MUP ‘14