

15 December 2016

Dear SCaRP Friend:

I hope this letter finds you and your family enjoying the warmth of the holiday season.

World events this year underscore the importance of planners' work: with widespread assertions of a *post-truth* society, our divided country desperately needs the thoughtful analysis and innovative design planners are known for. Our school been running fast to send as many highly-skilled planners into the field as possible and to offer new ideas that may help to re-frame vexing societal debates in productive ways.

Sixty-eight new graduate students enrolled in our four degree programs this August. They arrived from twelve states and five countries and have first degrees from 48 different institutions. They took the places of 49 graduates from 2015 who enjoyed a 97 percent planning/gis/urban design-related job placement rate and are working in eight states and two foreign countries, 52 percent in the private sector, 32 percent in public sector, and 16 percent third sector.

Among the student accolades this year, Ai-Lien Vuong (MCRP + M. Arch '15) was selected as an Enterprise Rose Fellow; Shelley Price (MCRP '16) was elected Southeastern District Representative to the Student Representatives Council Executive Committee of the American Planning Association; Jack Cebe (MCRP/MS-CE class of '17) and Carly Queen (MCRP + MS-CE Class of '16) received Eisenhower Fellowships from the United States Department of Transportation; Peter Hylton (PhD class of '17) received a U.S. DOT dissertation fellowship; Gloria Woods (MCRP + M. Arch. class of '18) was chosen as chair of AIAS-Georgia; Marcela Moreno (MCRP class of '16) was named as an Air and Waste Management Association Georgia Scholar; Melanie Metal (MCRP class of '16) received a Walt Fairchild Scholarship from the Council of Educational Facilities Planners International; Meghan McMullan (MCRP '16), Florina Dutt (MCRP '16) and Yihan Wu (MCRP '16) were joined by MS/Urban Design student Shijian Huang (class of '16), and MS/Computer Science student Subhajit Das as finalists in the Urban Land Institute 2016 Gerald Hines Urban Design Competition; and MS-Urban Design students Lindsay Brown, Elizabeth Carroll, Will Cioffi, Sarthak Dhingra, Rebecca Duncan, Sammy Shams, Imeri Kelly, Cierra McClary, Melissa Tertichny received a Georgia Planning Association Outstanding Student Project Award for their Mission-Zero I-85 Corridor Plan.

Alumni Paul Berge (MCP '76) and Rhonda Phillips (PhD '96) were inducted as Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Amanda Rhein (MCRP '04) was named one of 40 under 40 outstanding real estate professionals by the Urban Land Institute. The Atlanta Cycle Project, led by Brad Davis (MCRP '08) received the Young Planners in Transportation, Excellence in Innovation/Research of the Year Award. Ryan Gravel (MCP + M.Arch '99) published *Where We Want to Live – Reclaiming Infrastructure for a New Generation of Cities* (St. Martin's Press).

Alex Karner and Alberto Fuentes joined the tenure track faculty this year. Karner arrived from Arizona State University where he was a post-doctoral fellow; he earned a doctorate at University of California, Davis and studies equity in transportation. Fuentes is a joint appointment with the Nunn School of International Affairs and will anchor a new graduate certificate in international development; he earned a doctorate at MIT and studies industrial transformation in Latin-America. Sara Howard joined the School as Academic Program Manager, replacing Dracy Blackwell who moved to an advising management position in the School of Materials Science and Engineering. Howard came to us from Emory's Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences and earned an M.A. in Humanities from Florida State.

Among the highlights in research are three new grants totaling over \$7 million awarded to Nisha

Georgia Tech School of City and Regional Planning/Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0155 USA
www.planning.gatech.edu/voice: +1.404.894.2350/fax: +1.404.894.1628

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Botchwey to study active living, Brian Stone to study urban heat islands, and Nancey Green Leigh to study economic development impacts of robotics. Dan Immergluck's book, *Preventing the Next Mortgage Crisis: The Meltdown, The Federal Response, and the Future of Housing in America*, published by Rowman and Littlefield, headlined publications that included 23 refereed journal articles, 6 book chapters, and 49 papers presented at conferences of national or international learned societies and professional associations. Subhro Guhathakurta and Nancey Green Leigh concluded their four-year term as editors of the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*.

As the new undergraduate certificate program in Real Estate Development got underway, the School proposed an undergraduate minor in Sustainable Cities which was approved by Tech's faculty senate last spring – the first course in the minor will be taught this coming spring term by Bill Drummond with support from Georgia Tech's new Serve-Learn-Sustain office.

The core mission and values of city planners at Tech remain what they have always been, but the scale of today's SCaRP is quite different – 14 tenure-home faculty and 25 research, affiliated, and part-time faculty with 140 graduate students in four degree programs, four research centers and labs, two certificates and a third on the way, a new undergraduate minor, and alumni in 49 U.S. states and territories and 32 countries. Our footprint across Georgia, the nation, and the planet is substantial, and with an MCRP program ranking of 5th in the nation and the long list of recognitions illustrated above, clear evidence of excellence.

What may be hidden amongst all this good news is the pernicious effect of taxpayer revolt on the ability of young people of modest means to attend planning school and our ability to provide the best instructional resources. Out of state MCRP tuition and fees this year come to \$32,918, a far cry from the more modest freight asked of graduate students only a few decades ago and difficult to amortize on a public planner's salary. We are deeply concerned with recruiting the brightest students with ambitions to improve quality of life for future generations, and with providing the instructional resources to give them the very best in planning education.

You can help us recruit tomorrow's planners, financially or with your referrals and encouragement. We hope you will use our [pledge form](#) to offer what financial assistance you can. The School uses undesignated private giving to pay for facilities upgrades, data acquisition, field trips, guest speakers and social events that bring alumni and students together. There are also five fellowship funds that support graduate students directly and funds that increase the capacities of the Center for Geographic Information Systems and the Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development.

As you meet young people eager to make a difference in the world, please suggest the City Planning profession to them. Our [brochure](#) might be useful, as might the [planning career resources](#) we have on the web. Your referral might bring the next Thera Richter, the next Jack Glatting, or the next Art Campbell to Tech. Of course, if your firm or agency wants to hire a Tech planning student part-time through the [Co-op program](#), please let us know.

Thank you for your interest in and support of city and regional planning at Georgia Tech. Best wishes for the holidays and a resilient 2017!

With warm regards,



Bruce Stiffl, FAICP
Professor and Chair