The University of Oregon’s Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) AmeriCorps Program has won the Oregon Main Street Leadership Award, only the second time the agency has conferred the distinction. RARE operates through the Community Service Center in PPPM.

RARE was recognized “for recruiting bright young talent and nurturing them in their year of service, for developing the leaders of tomorrow, and for having an impact on developing local leadership and volunteerism in communities—a long-lasting impact.”

RARE AmeriCorps matches rural communities with graduate-level participants who live and work in communities for 11 months. RARE participants help communities develop and implement plans to improve rural economic conditions while gaining community-building and leadership skills.

“Receiving this award is truly an honor and the RARE program’s leadership role is only possible because of the wonderful partners we work with,” said Megan Smith, RARE AmeriCorps Program director. “Partnering with local communities and RARE participants to achieve community goals benefits everyone. Communities see their projects implemented and RARE participants receive real-world experience.”

RARE is the only program in the country to match the next generation of leaders from across the United States with the site-specific Main Street needs of rural communities.

“This has changed lives,” said RARE program coordinator Titus Tomlinson, and “it’s working for all parties involved. We’re bringing people from all over the country here to rural Oregon for service. Out of a short 11-month placement you’d be amazed how much these people can accomplish. They launch careers.”

Sheri Stuart, coordinator for Oregon Main Street, said RARE “does an amazing job in recruiting talented participants, matching their skills with our local downtown programs, and building future leaders. The participants bring a lot of energy and coordinating assistance to help organizations get off the ground with their revitalization efforts.”

Each RARE community provides a $22,000 cash contribution to place, train, and support a RARE participant. In return, the host communities get a full-time RARE member for 1,700 hours, support services from a team of six planning and policy analysts, and regular site visits and evaluation by RARE AmeriCorps staff members.

“It’s competitive for the communities as well as the members,” said Tomlinson. RARE carefully vets communities to ensure that what they hope to achieve is attainable through a RARE service year. “The placement process to match applicants with our Main Street communities is very extensive,” he said.

RARE has placed participants in towns throughout Oregon, including Brookings, Astoria, Reedsport, and Seaside on the coast, to La Grande, Canby, Oregon City, Sweet Home, Gold Hill, and elsewhere.

Smith and Tomlinson were on hand to accept the award October 7 in The Dalles during the Excellence in Revitalization Celebration at the Oregon Main Street annual conference.

The award was presented by Stuart and three RARE alumni—Alana Garner, Matthew Klebes, and Saira Siddiqui—all of whom now serve as executive directors for different Main Street communities in Oregon.

—Marti Gerdes
In November, Assistant Professor Dyana Mason and I were invited to present at a panel titled “Creating an Optimal Department Climate,” which was sponsored by the Center on Diversity and Community.

The topic was a daunting one for us, because my main message was that our department does not yet have an optimal climate. We have worked hard to increase the diversity of our faculty and student body, and this work is reflected in our numbers. Among our faculty, women hold six out of 10 tenure-track faculty positions, and three out of 10 are faculty of color. Among our non-tenure-track faculty who have teaching and service appointments, three are women, two are men, and there are no faculty of color. We have introduced new courses addressing diversity and have worked hard to support diversity among our students.

Currently among our undergraduate students, 55 percent are female and 22 percent are students of color. Among graduate students, 51 percent are women and 21 percent are students of color.

However, this past spring, a cross-section of students came forward to express concern that we were not doing enough to create a climate that supports equity and inclusion. They sponsored a listening session to voice concerns about class discussions, group projects, curriculum, and climate that needed to be improved. In response, the department launched an Equity Initiative cofacilitated by a faculty member, graduate student, and undergraduate student.

At the optimal climate forum, I shared two mistakes that I believe we made as a department, which I think are interesting for all our alumni to read about. First, we were complacent in addressing equity and inclusion. We had been successful in faculty recruitment, student recruitment, and diversifying our course offerings. Our complacency was our view that these efforts would produce an optimal climate without looking carefully at all aspects of our department. Second, we treated incidents as isolated rather than systemic. In other words, we responded to incidents in classroom discussions, student groups, and other settings as one-off events rather than thinking about them as adding up to a climate that was not optimal.

The good news is that the Equity Initiative has already been successful in developing a number of actions and strategies. The initiative has also received strong support from PPPM faculty, staff, and students. You can read more about the terrific work of this group below. This will not be a one-off effort, but will need to be sustained as an ongoing initiative. I expect we will continue to make mistakes in the future, but spurred by our student activism we are working through this together.

Richard Margerum, PhD
Professor and Department Head
rdm@uoregon.edu

PPPM Launches Student-Faculty Equity Initiative

Following concerns and recommendations by master’s degree students in spring 2015, a student-faculty Equity Initiative was formed to help the department become more inclusive and welcoming of students from underrepresented backgrounds, including students of color, international students, those with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender students, among others.

Starting work in fall 2015, the initiative has already identified tasks and activities to support equity and inclusion in classroom management and curriculum, in the overall department environment, and in recruitment and retention of students and members of the faculty and staff.

Faculty members have organized workshops on leading and supporting challenging classroom conversations and have received information on additional training and resources available to all UO faculty members. Several have attended and spoken at Week of Welcome events hosted by the Center on Multicultural Academic Excellence, and were invited to participate in the Center on Diversity and Community’s workshop on creating an optimal departmental climate.

Both undergraduate and graduate students have also been engaged in the Equity Initiative and have participated in outreach and education activities, including developing a code of conduct, adding additional support and social events, participating in a meet and greet, and other mentorship activities.

Finally, the initiative provided feedback on PPPM’s strategic plan, helping the department plan for the future. For more information, contact Dyana Mason, dmason@uoregon.edu, or Jouapag Lee, jouapagl@uoregon.edu.

Gifts to PPPM Support Students

The department counts on the generosity of alumni and friends to support and enhance the professional development of PPPM students. Each fall and spring term, students may apply for a grant through the PPPM Research and Travel Award Program to attend conferences, conduct research, and make presentations at national events. The PPPM Public Service Internship Award supports students selected for unpaid internships with nonprofit or public sector organizations.

If you would like to support students, please give to the UO Foundation and direct your gift to PPPM. You may use the envelope included with this newsletter or mail to UO Annual Giving Program, 1720 E. 13th Ave., Suite 312, Eugene, Oregon 97403-2253; or visit the website. Thank you!
Community Service Center News

Travel Oregon Lauds CPW’s Historic Theaters Project

The Community Service Center (CSC), and specifically the Community Planning Workshop (CPW), received a great shout-out from Travel Oregon, Oregon’s tourism agency, for CPW’s work on the historic theater project. Utilizing Travel Oregon matching grant funds, the CSC, and specifically some very motivated students, reached out to Oregon’s 127 historic theaters to assess their physical, operational, and financial needs. Along the way the students discovered many pressing issues on their path to helping lay the foundation for a statewide historic theater initiative that will ultimately support and strengthen these community treasures. Findings have been shared with industry audiences at the Oregon Heritage Conference, Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) Regards to Rural Conference, and the Oregon Main Street Conference. Read more about this valuable project or take some time to view the video at http://bit.ly/INbLBZV.

Sustainable Cities Initiative

Yang Guides SCI Portland-China Project

Since last fall, the Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) China Program, led by Associate Professor Yizhao Yang, in collaboration with Portland Metro government, has been conducting a project with two professional Chinese planning institutes, the Chinese Academy of Urban Planning and Design and Suzhou Urban Planning and Design Company Ltd., on the adoption of Portland’s urban growth boundary (UGB)-centered planning strategies to Suzhou City’s master plan. Through introducing Portland’s UGB-centered planning techniques and strategies, assessing the feasibility of adopting a UGB under different conditions, and providing recommendations for the adoption, implementation, and amendment of such a tool in Suzhou, the project generated a series of reports helping the city address the serious environmental, social, and economic problems brought to it by decades of rapid export-based development. The project was completed summer 2015.

SCI Appoints Rebecca Lewis to Lead New Research

Rebecca Lewis, assistant professor and newly appointed Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) research director, is leading an innovative two-year effort that explicitly focuses university research on a vexing issue identified by practitioners and policymakers related to issues of sustainability and cities. The effort is similar to university-industry research cooperation, but in this case the industry is public sector-, policy-, and community-oriented.

The 2015–17 research theme, called “Framing Livability,” addresses how sustainability-focused community development efforts can be communicated in the most effective way to garner public support. The “Framing Livability” theme came about through multiple conversations with practitioners at local, state, and national levels. The project itself is being guided with input from the City of Portland, Portland Metro, Transportation for America, and the Natural Resources Defense Council. Two grants from the National Institute for Transportation and Communities are supporting this work, and researchers from four units within the University of Oregon are engaged in this truly multidisciplinary applied research effort including Lewis, Rob Zako (SCI), Dave Redmond (journalism), Kelli Mathews (journalism), Deb Morrison (journalism), and Nico Larco (architecture).

In addition to the grant-funded research itself, the SCI theme year program includes hosting experts-in-residence, mentoring graduate fellows, organizing public symposia and other public outreach, and disseminating research findings through a variety of outlets in Oregon and across the country.

Student News

Three PPPM Students Honored with Graduate School Awards

Michael Thier, MPA candidate, received the Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund award; Debora Calderon, nonprofit management candidate, received a Fulbright; Brandon Rigby, MA ’10, MNM ’14, received the Oregon Humanities Center for Graduate Dissertations Fellowship Award (Romance languages).

Travel Award Aids Committee’s Minimum Wage Research

With his spring PPPM travel award, Alex Macfarlan, MPA ’15, traveled frequently to Portland to work as a member of the City Club of Portland’s research committee on the minimum wage in Oregon. The committee will complete its report in August and the City Club will publish a summary of the findings to better inform Oregonians about the issues underlying the numerous minimum wage proposals currently being debated in Salem. Macfarlan is from Sydney, Australia, and specializes in economic development, migration, and labor policy issues.
Ducks Gain Policy, Research Experience in Nation’s Capital

Student Spotlight

Interns Gain Experience Nationwide

PPM graduates were engaged in summer internships throughout the United States and abroad during summer 2015. Their experiences integrated theory and practice, providing opportunities to explore career interests, and offered avenues to develop professional networks.

Jouapag Lee, master of nonprofit management candidate, was selected for the competitive New Alliance Fellowship. After a multistep application and interview process, she was matched with the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation in the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood in Minnesota. Lee provided internal capacity support to Broadcast Factory, a pilot summer youth program. She also supported the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood Initiative, a collaborative of nonprofits dedicated to funding grassroots programs and halting the school-to-prison pipeline. The experience aligned well with her career goals of promoting equal opportunity and justice, inclusion, and equity. The fellowship provided a $2,000 stipend, training, mentorship, and coaching.

Master of community and regional planning student John Jackson spent his summer in Seattle at the US Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration office. As an intern with the 2015 Summer Transportation Internship Program for Diverse Groups, Jackson broadened his knowledge of federal transit programs. He worked with planners, engineers, and program specialists on several projects and networked with transit planners throughout the Pacific Northwest and Southern California.

Brown’s internship exceeded her expectations as it so closely aligned with her career goal of working in affordable housing. She learned about the housing market, affordable housing policy, federal funding systems, and the interconnected issues of housing, health, and education. In addition, she met dozens of professionals working in the field, conducted several informational interviews, and began interviewing people for her professional project.

Jaleel Reed completed a paid internship with the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness. He learned about the opportunity through his personal network. As a research intern, he built models using Stata, identified state-by-state occupational changes, and analyzed business incentives and tax expenditures. The internship supported Reed’s goal of designing and implementing economic development solutions that integrate the needs of low-to-moderate income individuals and environmental well-being.

One highlight of Reed’s experience was working on miniprojects for the CEO, something he had not anticipated at the beginning of his internship. He advises all interns to demonstrate an investment in the organization through inquiry and a willingness to assist with a variety of projects.

Dominique Schneider, an undergraduate PPPM major, secured a full-time, competitive summer internship with Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) in San Francisco, California. As part of the Energy Efficiency Policy and Strategy team, Schneider completed a comprehensive review of California’s energy policies to guide the department’s project-based work. She expanded her technical writing and professional communication skills, and learned about project development and implementation along with utility companies and the way they respond to changing regulations and policies.

After graduation, Schneider plans to be part of the environmental movement. She notes that the highlight of her internship was working with a team of committed energy efficiency professionals who are “determined to make a difference within all sectors.” She advises other students to reach out and network during their internship, adding that professionals are interested in supporting the learning experience and helping interns see the potential in opportunities.
Bolton Wins Senate Leadership and Governance Award

Miriam Bolton, MPA candidate and assistant dean of administration and operations in the College of Arts and Sciences, was honored last May by the University Senate with the Senate Leadership and Governance Award.

Award-Winning Graduate Student Appointed to Sustainability Commission

Alexis Biddle, concurrent master of community and regional planning and law student, was recently appointed to the City of Eugene Sustainability Commission, a 13-member group of citizens, including one councilor, who act as a policy advisory body to the council and city manager in the initiation or development of programs that will create or enhance sustainable practices within the community. Earlier this year, Alexis Biddle was selected for the Oregon Fellows Program. The highly competitive program attracts graduate students from major universities across the United States and matches them with local and state governments and nonprofit organizations. Fellows receive a $5,000 stipend along with professional development activities.

This summer, Biddle served as an advisor for the Oregon Department of Transportation in Salem. A part of his fellowship, which continues through the year, is the coordination of division leaders who create policy as a group.

Zlevor Selected for Kantor Family Internship

Gregg Kantor, MUP ’81, generously gave back to his alma mater by establishing the Kantor Family Internship. Kantor, president and CEO of Northwest Natural, dedicated this endowed fund to provide resources each year to support a PPPM student selected for an energy-related internship in Oregon. The award may be used for internship-related expenses such as travel, supplies, materials, tuition and student fees, and living expenses. The primary selection criteria are academic performance and the merits of the student’s internship plans.

Department News

Green Cities Courses Focus on Independence and Aumsville, Oregon

Students in the summer 2015 Green Cities course (PPPM 445) were invited to conduct a design charrette and research project for the City of Aumsville, Oregon. The mayor, city manager, city officials, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development officials, and many local citizens spent the day on city corridor planning and design.

The final report includes a variety of student research topics and more than 165 specific recommendations. This fall term, Green Cities (PPPM 445) students are working with city and state officials, citizens, and professional planners at the City of Independence, Oregon, to organize a design charrette and prepare sustainable development, urban resiliency, and regenerative design research and recommendations. City officials have asked the class members to consider a variety of research topics, including development code and district planning, gateway and streetscape design.

Net Night Provides Forum to Gather Contacts, Information

Net Night brought together local alumni and first-year graduate students for an evening of networking on October 15 at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art. For the third year, alumni generously shared their professional experience, career advice, and internship opportunities. As MaryBeth Deiters, graduate student in public administration, said, “It was so great to meet alumni who not only work in the field but remain passionate about the issues.”

Stephanie Scafa, MCRP ’11 and MPA ’11, welcomed everyone and stressed the value of making connections and building relationships. Rich Margerum, professor and department head, encouraged students to start developing their networks early in their graduate studies.

As the evening came to a close, students left with business cards and offers from alumni to meet again. Thank you, alumni, for sharing and caring!

—Rhonda Smith

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—Rhonda Smith

Kelsey Zlevor

Kelsey Zlevor, a second-year MCRP student, was the recipient of the 2015 award. She interned with Renewable Northwest in Portland. Zlevor’s internship focused on the legal aspects of renewable energy advocacy and the collection of economic development data for renewable energy projects in Oregon.

Nicolello Becomes Youngest Eugene Planning Commission Member

Bree Nicollelo, PPPM undergraduate student, became a member of Eugene Planning Commission by vote of the City Council in June. She is one of the first women, and by far the youngest member, to ever serve on the commission. She’ll join Kristen Taylor, MCRP ’98, a PPPM alumna, on the commission.

Bree Nicollelo

Students join officials and local citizens in Aumsville, Oregon, to celebrate their research project.
Recent Alumni Named Hatfield Resident Fellows

Three recent graduates received Hatfield Resident Fellows Program fellowships.

Andre LeDuc, MCRP ’99, was quoted in the news of the Chronicle of Higher Education in October and UO Media on emergency procedures: http://bit.ly/1U4lyX5

Drew Pfefferle, MCRP ’15, is Commuteride outreach specialist with the Ada County Highway Division in Boise, Idaho.

Liz Rickles, MPA ’15, is web developer and fund manager with the Oregon Department of Transportation Rail and Public Transit Division in Salem, Oregon.

Jennifer Self-Goldstein, MCRP and MS ’15 (historic preservation), is associate planner with Tahoe Regional Planning Agency in Stateline, Nevada.

Laura Stroud, MCRP ’15, is conservation and stewardship associate with Triangle Land Conservancy in Durham, North Carolina.

Eli Tome, MCRP ’15, is sovereign lands coordinator, southeastern area, with the Utah Department of Natural Resources in Moab, Utah.

Julie Weismann, MMN ’15, is development director for the Cascades Raptor Center in Eugene, Oregon.

Xiao Xiong, BA ’15 (PPPM), is Safe Routes to School program coordinator with Multnomah County Transportation Planning. AmeriCorps State and National.

Jordan Grace, BS ’14 (PPPM and environmental science), is coastal program analyst (coastal planner) for California Coastal Commission—South Central Coast District.

Nick Meltzer, MCRP ’14, is the assistant bicycle and pedestrian coordinator for the State of Vermont in Montpelier.

Evelyn Perdomo, MCRP ’14, is project assistant with Mercy Housing California in San Francisco.

Kyra Schneider, BA ’14 (PPPM), is Metro Council support intern with Metro in Portland, Oregon.

Celeste Wooldridge-Chillemi, BS ’14 (PPPM), is an AmeriCorps member with City Year Columbus.

Andrea Bennett, MPA ’15, is staff auditor with the Oregon Secretary of State Audits Division.

Maja Birdwell, BS ’15 (PPPM), is language and culture assistant for the Spanish government, Department of Language, Culture, and Sport.

Allie Breyer, MPA ’15, is a planner 1 with Pacific Community Design in Tigard, Oregon.

Allison Brinkhorst, MMN ’15, is development coordinator at Ecotrust in Portland, Oregon.

Jessica Cox, MMN ’15, is development and communications manager for communities in Schools of Federal Way, Washington.

Kayleigh Frater, MPA ’15, is administrative support coordinator at Humboldt State University in Eureka, California.

Katie Gatlin, MPA ’15, is director of development and communications for Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Lane County.

Rose Lombino, BS ’15 (PPPM and philosophy), is administrative and development support for the Northwest Association for Blind Athletes.

Clare Murphy, BA ’15 (PPPM), is project assistant, portfolio syndication for Mercy Housing California.

Lindsay Pepper, MMN ’15, MA ’15 (international studies), is program coordinator with International Student and Scholar Services and Outreach at Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina.

Ross Peizer, MCRP ’15, is the business relations manager at Westside Transportation Alliance in Beaverton, Oregon.

Sarah Allison, MCRP ’15, is assistant planner with the City of Eugene.

Lokyee Au, MCRP and MS ’15 (environmental studies), is community committees and public affairs coordinator with the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods in Portland, Oregon.

Jon Bennett, MPA ’15, is staff auditor with the Oregon Secretary of State Audits Division.

Evelyn Perdomo, MCRP ’14, is project assistant with Mercy Housing California in San Francisco.

Aniko Drlik-Muehleck, MCRP ’15, accepted a fellowship with Lane County Community and Economic Development Division. She will be involved in economic development in rural Lane County. Steve Dobrinich, MCRP ’15, accepted a fellowship with Lane County Community and Economic Development Division. He will work on economic development in rural Lane County.

Amanda D’Souza, MPA ’15, will be working with Clackamas County Department of Business and Community Development Services. The Hatfield Resident Fellowship is an eight-month program for graduate students with a commitment to public service and leadership potential. The fellowships have proven to be successful launch positions for our graduates.

Nyssa Rivera, MPA ’14, is now working as an assistant financial analyst for the City of Portland, and Lauren King, MCRP ’13, JD ’13, subsequently worked in the Portland mayor’s office and is now an attorney with Leahy, Van Vactor, Cox & Melendy, LLP, in Springfield, Oregon.

Conference Activities

Participants at a PPPM reception during the American Planning Association Conference in Seattle enjoy reconnecting. PPPM had invited alumni, friends, students, and current and former faculty members to the gathering during the conference in April.

Please send alumni news to pppm@uoregon.edu. The Alumni Notes are published in alphabetical order within degree year.

Ashley Adelman, BS ’15 (PPPM and environmental studies), is community engagement coordinator for McKenzie River Action Team and is a Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) AmeriCorps member.

Sarah Allison, MCRP ’15, is assistant planner with the City of Eugene.

Lokyee Au, MCRP and MS ’15 (environmental studies), is community committees and public affairs coordinator with the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods in Portland, Oregon.

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Ross Peizer, MCRP ’15, is the business relations manager at Westside Transportation Alliance in Beaverton, Oregon.
Professor Emeritus Michael Hibbard’s active retirement continues. In September, he co-led (with Bruce Weber of Oregon State University) public discussions in Medford and Ashland on Oregon’s rural-urban divide, as part of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival Living Ideas program. In addition, he has three recent publications: “Multifunctional Rural Regional Development: Evidence from the John Day Watershed in Oregon,” coauthored with Lauren Senkyer of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries and Mark Webb, former Grant County judge, in Journal of Planning Education and Research; “Planning, Governance and Rural Futures in Australia and the USA: Revisiting the Case for Rural Regional Planning,” coauthored with Australian colleagues, in Journal of Environmental Planning and Management; and “The New Natural Resource Economy: A Framework for Rural Community Resilience,” coauthored with alumna Sue Lurie, BS ’95, MCRP ’97, is a chapter in the book Bridging the Distance: Common Issues in the Rural West (University of Utah Press).

Assistant Professor Grant Jacobsen serves as MPA director beginning with the 2015–16 academic year. Jacobsen is well established in program leadership, having played an active role as a core MPA faculty member since coming to the UO in 2010.

Courtesy Research Associate Edward Jepson’s Fundamentals of Plan Making: Methods and Techniques, with Jerry Weitz, FAICP, will be published by Routledge in December. The book discusses the collection and analysis of data to create information for use in the preparation of comprehensive plans. More information may be found at https://www.routledge.com/products/9781138024366.

Assistant Professor Dyana Mason has a forthcoming article, “Advocacy in Nonprofit Organizations: A Leadership Perspective” in Nonprofit Policy Forum.

Robert Parker, CSC codirector, Rebecca Lewis, assistant professor, and PPPM alumni Ken Kato, MCRP ’00, and Terry Moore, MUP ’77, completed several studies for the Department of Land Conservation and Development on efficiency of land use, redevelopment and mixed use, and rural residential development in what has been called “the most comprehensive review of development that’s occurred in UGBs in Oregon to date.” Reports are available on the DLCD website: www.oregon.gov/LCD/Pages/UGB-Streamlining.aspx.

Assistant Professor Gerardo Sandoval is coediting Bicycle Justice and Urban Transformation: Biking for All? (Routledge).

Marc Schlossberg, professor and Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) codirector, received a Senior Fulbright Fellowship (his second Fulbright) and is based at Israel’s Technion Institute of Technology through February 2016. Earlier in 2015, Schlossberg accepted, on behalf of SCI, the Cordes Innovation Award from Ashoka, giving a TED-style talk to 900 social innovators and entrepreneurs. Among his publications this year, Schlossberg copublished a chapter in the book Fixing Sprawl titled “Rethinking Residential On-Street Parking,” and an article on user perceptions of walkability in the Journal of Urbanism. Schlossberg also led 19 students on a summer study-abroad course in Denmark and the Netherlands focused on redesigning cities for people on bikes, partially supported by a $100,000 grant from the Scan Design Foundation for the 2015 course and a course in summer 2017.

Rhonda Smith (PPPM), Bob Parker (CSC), Josh Bruce (CSC), Michael Howard (CSC), and Titus Tomlinson (CSC) received promotions this year as nontenure faculty career instructors.

Instructor Ric Stephens was elected president of the International Society of City and Regional Planners, a global association of planners from more than 80 countries.

Ngo, Asseko Conduct First Air Quality Study in Gabon

Over summer 2015, Assistant Professor Nicole Ngo and second-year MPA student Sigride Asseko conducted the first urban air quality study in Gabon. In many sub-Saharan African countries, there are no air quality regulations due to lack of pollution monitoring, though urbanization rates in this region are among the highest in the world. Ngo and Asseko collaborated with students, professors, and officials from the Gabon-Oregon Transnational Research Center, local universities, and government agencies to conduct this pilot study, which measured urban background levels and personal exposure levels to roadway emissions. They hope results from this study will be the first step toward understanding urban air quality in Gabon and encouraging development of policies to regulate it. Ngo also published two articles during the summer related to her previous work on air quality in Nairobi, Kenya, and New York City.


Associate Professor Yizhao Yang is working on several research projects in China during her sabbatical leave. She was awarded a research grant from the Urban China Initiative (UCI), a joint initiative led by Columbia University, Tsinghua University, and McKinsey & Company, to study the applicability of some well-known US urban growth management strategies in Chinese cities. Yang also received a fellowship as a visiting scholar at Peking University’s Lincoln Institute Center for Urban Development and Land Policy, where she studies urban form changes in Chinese cities. She is also collaborating with scholars and designers at Beijing Tsinghua Tongheng Urban Planning and Design Institute to study sustainable urban development practices in China.
Give to PPPM

PPPM uses alumni contributions to support student travel and research, special events, and alumni activities.

You can send checks payable to the University of Oregon Foundation to PPPM, or visit our website, pppm.uoregon.edu, and click Give Now for access to the secure online contributions site.

Give Now

Two Selected for PPPM Public Service Internship Awards

This year, two outstanding students received the PPPM Public Service Internship Award. The purpose of the award is to offset some of the costs of an unpaid, public service–focused internship for undergraduate and graduate students. The department is able to make these awards based on the generosity of our alumni and supporters.

Max Morrison, an undergraduate PPPM major, spent his summer as an intern with Oregon Climate, a nonprofit organization dedicated to passing fair and effective climate-change legislation. A highlight of Morrison’s internship was meeting with a state representative to gain support for a climate-related Senate bill. After graduation, Morrison plans to pursue a career in climate-change policy or environmental law.

Erika Takeo, a second year nonprofit management graduate student, spent the summer in Nicaragua as an intern at Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo (ATC). Takeo chose the internship as a way to learn about food sovereignty and agroecology, and to strengthen her Spanish language skills. She also gained a social justice–driven understanding of the food system and practical experience with resource development and fundraising. Takeo plans a career in food justice, and with immigrant and refugee populations in the United States.