

The URBS Post

Newsletter of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning,
at California State University, Northridge.

Fall 2019

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Full-Time Faculty

Rob Kent, Ph.D. (Chair)
Henrik Minassians, Ph.D.
Craig Olwert, Ph.D.
Ward Thomas, Ph.D.
Zeynep Toker, Ph.D.
Mintesnot G. Woldeamanuel, Ph.D.

Part-Time Faculty

Bradley Calvert, M.A.
Euripedes DeOliveira, Ph.D.
Scott Howard, J.D.
Andrew Jared, J.D.
Cecilia Kim, Ph.D.
Brettany Shannon, Ph.D.
Diana Varat, J.D.
Dev Vrat, M.A., AICP
Claude Willey, M.F.A.
Juliana Zanotto, Ph.D.

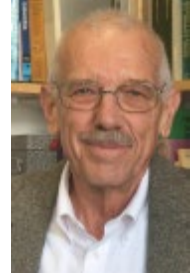
Department Staff

Mirna Reyes, Administrative Support
Coordinator
Charity Tolefree, Administrative
Support Assistant
Michelle Rivera, Student Assistant

From the Chair

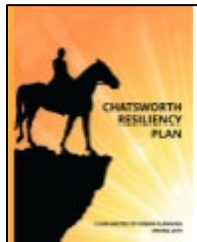
The Alumni Scholarship

Scholarships are important. They contribute directly to student success by helping to cover the costs of tuition, books, and simply living expenses while they pursue their degree. Scholarships also contribute to the long-term success of our students in other less direct ways. They help build the student's confidence and indirectly encourages them to apply for other scholarships. Further, when cited on a student's resume, a scholarship also sends a positive message to potential employers about the applicant's abilities and work ethic. For these reasons, the Department inaugurated the annual "Alumni Scholarship" which has been generously funded by alumni donations. Last spring the Department awarded two Alumni Scholarships of \$1,000 each, and this spring we again hope to offer at least two scholarships. We need your help to do so. Please consider donating to the department to support the Alumni Scholarship fund. No donation is too small. Every bit helps!



Masters' Project

Chatsworth Resiliency



The 2019 Masters of Urban Planning class developed the Chatsworth Resiliency Plan. Through archival research, interviews, public meetings and on-line surveys, the students worked with the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council to identify green infrastructure, good jobs and infrastructure management as good indicators to increase Chatsworth's resiliency. The final plan developed 13 recommendations for the neighborhood and city to pursue to increase and improve the safety, environment, and community connections needed for a resilient neighborhood. The recommendations are developed consistent with the Resilient LA Plan, but focus on Chatsworth.

Faculty Research

Dr. Mintesnot Woldeamanuel US Fulbright Scholar

Dr. Mintesnot Woldeamanuel, Urban Studies and Planning Professor, spent Fall 2018 and



Spring 2019 in Ethiopia as part of the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program. As a U.S. Fulbright Scholar, he taught courses to urban and regional planning Ph.D. students in Addis Ababa University. He also served as lead thesis advisor for master's students. He gave guest lectures, seminars and workshops to six universities outside of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. "Sharing my knowledge and experiences with Ethiopian students and professionals is the most humbling experience I ever had." Woldeamanuel said. He was working on a research project that seeks to

understand the challenges of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system in Addis Ababa city from riders' perspectives. "I was born in Addis Ababa, so this gives me an opportunity to get back to my origin and give back," Woldeamanuel said. "The LRT was opened in 2015 in order to meet the ever-increasing travel demand in the city. My students and I collected data from riders and the adjacent communities, and we gathered air quality data at several stations. Through the analysis of the data, we hope to learn the challenges of the rail system and propose some solutions to the Rail Authority to better improve the rail transit service." Based on the findings of the research, he is co-writing journal papers with graduate students and professors from Addis Ababa University. The first paper will be presented at Transportation Research Board (TRB) Annual Conference in January 2020. Dr. Woldeamanuel is also writing a book on urban issues in rapidly growing cities by taking Addis Ababa as a case study.

Graduates Spring 2019

Bachelor in Urban Studies and Planning

- Megan Anghel
- Ethan Becker
- William Cabrera
- Ohan Derderian
- Michael Edenedo
- Quetzalli Enrique
- Stephanie Escobar
- Adrian Flores
- Cinthya Guzman-Rodriguez
- Carly Hollas
- Tatsunari Kawanami
- Shannon Kitover
- Naasirah Maimoonah
- Fredy Martinez
- Ryosuke Nagai
- Ricardo Padilla
- Cali Piccirillo
- Beverly Quezada
- Alexander Roberts
- Andres Rodriguez
- Claudia Sillas
- Angel Valeriano
- Denmark Valerio

Masters of Urban Planning (MUP)

- Sahar Abbasnia
- Adrienne Asadoorian
- Aashka M. Dave
- Tyler-Cruise Eaton
- Ka Lai Hon
- Nader Khalil
- Marie-Jose Njoku-Obi
- Sofia Ramirez
- Evan Sensibile
- Mecca Umazar
- Christian Vargas
- Canei Womack
- Yixuan Zhu

Campus Spotlight

The New Sierra Annex
CSUN has begun planning for a much-needed renovation of Sierra



Hall, home to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. The project is intended to modernize the building and upgrade the facilities to contemporary standards. In anticipation of this project, all open lecture classrooms in Sierra Hall will be relocated to a new building, dubbed Sierra Annex, to be located on the grassy lawn adjacent to Sierra and Manzanita Halls.

Once classrooms have been moved to the Annex, Sierra Hall will be renovated with a focus on the capital renewal of the facility. Sierra Hall will be renovated in phases while it is occupied, with one desired outcome being a rational reorganization of space. The university expects to break ground on the Sierra Annex in early 2021 and if all goes well occupy the building in Spring 2023. It is hoped that the funding for the renovation of Sierra Hall will come from the passage of a statewide bond issue on the March 2020 ballot to build and modernize educational facilities in the state.

Community Partner Spotlight

The California Transportation Foundation (CTF) is a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to supporting the transportation industry and its members. Through donations from individuals, corporations, and other organizations the CTF provides a range of services to the transportation community. These include career development, transportation recognition awards, forums, and financial assistance to transportation workers who have been injured or died on the job.

The CTF also places a strong emphasis on supporting students across the state. It offers many scholarships as well as the annual Transportation Education Symposium each fall to a select group of undergraduate students. Regularly over the last ten years, students from the Department who have a special

interest in transportation have been selected to attend the CTF Education Symposium and some of those have successfully competed for scholarship awards from the organization. Last year Carly Hollas ('19) received a scholarship from the organization. In Fall 1019, two students from the Department, Jaclyn Rackerby and Davis Moreno, attended the symposium as guests of CTF. The Department is very appreciative of the support the CTF has provided over the years to our students.

Alumni Updates

- **Carlos Contreras** ('06) is an associate planner with the Community Development Department for the City of Thousand Oaks, CA.
- **Andres Di Zitti** ('10) is a manager for transportation operations with LA-METRO.
- **Vanessa Faul** ('17) is a transportation planner with the California Department of Transportation (District 5) in San Luis Obispo, CA.
- **Samuel Gutierrez** ('12) is a planner in the planning and community environment department at the City of Palo Alto, CA.
- **Eric Haack** ('05) is a strategic planner at Access Services in Los Angeles County.
- **Kendall Irvin** ('17) is a planning technician for the City of Santa Clarita, CA.
- **Larry Jenkins** ('15) is a community development analyst at the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Authority.
- **Jim Kingsley** ('74) is retired in Fallbrook, CA.
- **Susana Martinez** ('17) is an assistant planner with the City of Huntington Park, CA.
- **Jorge Martinez** ('13) works for LA-METRO where he is a transportation planner focusing on service planning and scheduling.
- **Raquel Menanno** ('18) is an assistant planner for the City of Eureka, CA.
- **Ricardo Meza** ('14) is a contract auditor for Promotion Plus Inc. Sign Co. in Southern California.
- **Molivann Phlong** (MUP, '18) is a homeless program representative for the California Department of Housing and Community Development in Sacramento, CA.
- **Jose Quintanilla** (MUP, '18) is an assistant planner in the Community Development Department for the City of Sacramento, CA.
- **Donna Rosser** ('06) is a senior planner in the Department of Environmental Services for the City of Simi Valley, CA.
- **Miguel Vazquez** ('01) is a healthy communities, urban regional planner at Riverside University Health System in Riverside, CA.
- **Joel Weise** ('79) is retired in Bowen Island d, BC, Canada.

Faculty Achievements

Token, Zeynep

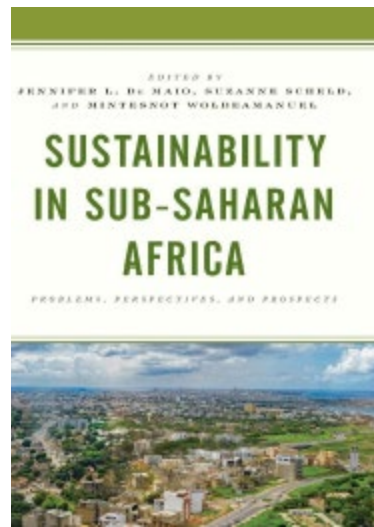
“Latinas Involvement in Urban Planning”
Paper presented at Environmental Design
Research Association (EDRA) Conference,
Brooklyn, New York, 2019.

Olwert, Craig

(2019) “Resilience planning at the
neighborhood scale” Urban Affairs
Association (With Zeynep Token and
Alessandro Rigolon) April 25, 2019

Jennifer De Maio, Suzanne Scheld and
Mintesnot Woldeamanuel (editors)

“Sustainability in Sub-Saharan Africa,
Problems, Perspectives, and Prospects”,
Rowman and Littlefield, January 2019.



Masters of Urban Planning

The Department of Urban Studies and
Planning graduated its third cohort of the
Masters of Urban Planning (MUP) program
in May, 2019. The fifth cohort of students
began in the Fall of 2019.

The Master of Urban Planning program will
be accepting applications for the Fall 2020
semester. Priority admission deadline is:

March 6th, 2020.

Faculty Spotlight

Dev Vrat, AICP

Urban Studies and Planning
Lecturer Dev Vrat has over
30 years of urban land use
planning and environmental
compliance under his belt and is currently a
planning consultant. He was formerly a
Senior Urban and Environmental Planner
for AECOM Corporation, an engineering,
design, and construction firm. He is also a
former Assistant Director of the Santa
Barbara County Resource Management
Department where he managed six
planning and environmental divisions. His
areas of interest include Sustainability,
General Plans, Environmental Review,
Public Involvement Programs and world
travel. He has managed preparation of
general plan elements, coastal plans,
community and specific plans, transit-
oriented development plans, campus plans,
transportation plans, park and open space
plans, urban design guidelines, capital
improvement plans, public participation
programs, interactive websites and public
infrastructure finance plans. He has
provided independent technical review of
U.S. military base master plans and design
guidelines. He has managed the preparation
of university and medical campus master
plans and EIR/S' for major energy projects.
He is a member of the American Institute of
Certified Planners and sits on the California
State Board of the Association of
Environmental Professionals. Professor Vrat
is also certified by the National Charette
Institute.



Bon Voyage

Ian Donaldson, our department's Office Assistant for the last 3 years, moved back to his hometown in Portland with his wife in October. Best wishes, many thanks and bon voyage!

Thanks to Our Donors

- Monica Haboush
- Richard and Maxine Simon

Contact us

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URBS [Facebook Page](#) URBS [Twitter Page](#)

We love correspondence from our alumni! Please keep in touch with us. We would like to learn about the exciting events and accomplishments in your life. Please consider keeping us updated on any changes in contact information, so we can stay in touch.

Internships

We are always looking to expand our internship program. Let us know if your company offers internships and we will share this information with our students.

Donations

Please consider giving; no gift is too small. Your support provides both financial

support and encouragement to students. Information on ways to give can be found at: <https://givenow.csun.edu/> or by calling Dr. Rob Kent at 818-677-4372.

Newsletter Submissions

If you would like to send us information for upcoming issues, or if you have any questions, contact the Chair of the Department, Dr. Rob Kent at rkent@csun.edu; phone: 818-677-4372.