



THE **URBS** POST

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF URBAN STUDIES AND PLANNING,
AT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

FALL 2022

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Full-Time Faculty

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Paloma Giottonini, Ph.D.
Henrik Minassians, Ph.D.
Craig Olwert, Ph.D.
Ward Thomas, Ph.D.
Zeynep Toker, Ph.D.
Mintesnot Woldeamanuel, Ph.D.

Part-Time Faculty

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Scott Howard, J.D.
Brettany Shannon, Ph.D.
Dev Vrat, M.A., AICP
Claude Willey, M.F.A.

Staff

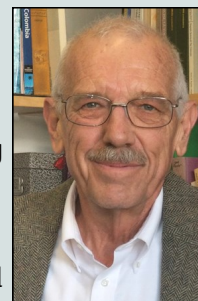
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CSUN

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE:

The fall semester at CSUN has been fabulous. The weather has been beautiful and most importantly the campus is busy and the hallways pulse with earnest students hustling to class or off to work. The campus has the look and feel of life in the pre-COVID times. In the department, we continue to offer our students a strong curriculum in urban studies and planning and to help them prepare for rewarding and productive careers in the field. We require internships for all undergraduates and encourage them to explore career options prior to graduation. Please let us know if you are looking for an intern. We'll spread the word among our undergraduate and graduate students and strongly encourage them to apply. We continue to strive to provide increased and enhanced scholarship opportunities for the department's students. Each year we are able to provide support to some students due entirely to the generous gifts from the department's alumni and friends. But we'd like to be able to help many more of our deserving students with financial support and with your help we can. So, if your circumstances permit it, please consider making a gift to the department's Alumni Scholarship Endowment Fund.



Dr. Rob Kent

CONGRATULATIONS MIRNA!



Mirna and faculty members

After over five years as the department's administrative coordinator, Mirna Reyes has accepted a new position at CSUN in the Office of Student Success. This is a fantastic opportunity for Mirna and builds on her commitment to student success, her recently completed MA in Educational Leadership, and her career goals. Mirna has done a superb job as the department's administrative coordinator. She has been committed to the department's mission of student success and has contributed to creating a helpful, supportive atmosphere for students and faculty in the department. She has also managed the department's administrative operations with care and found ways to resolve most of the sticky problems and snafus that have appeared. Many thanks Mirna for a job very well done! It is a bittersweet moment. Mirna will be greatly missed here, but at the same time, we are happy for her and her career success. Congratulations Mima!

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DR. WOLDEAMANUEL

Dr. Mintesnot Woldeamanuel has been awarded the Academic Affairs Research Fellow for the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences for the 2022-2023 academic year. Research Fellows receive a significant cash award to cover research expenses and are also reassigned from teaching and other duties to research, allowing them to focus intensively on their research during the course of the academic year. Dr. Woldeamanuel's project is called the "Built Environment Disparity: Assessing the Impact of Urban Design on Active Living across Different Socio-economic Groups in Los Angeles." The results of the research will help inform policy makers and contribute to an improvement of "active living" opportunities for the region's residents. Congratulations Dr. Woldeamanuel!



Dr. Woldeamanuel

CHATSWORTH PARK URBAN PLANNING MAGNET SCHOOL PROJECT

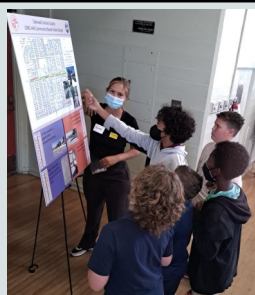


Photo of Michelle Ramirez presenting on Sidewalk Quality.

Dr. Zeynep Toker and her Urban Design class conducted a site analysis of the Chatsworth Park Urban Planning Magnet Elementary School. The school offers a unique curriculum that enables students to focus on critical thinking and collaboration within their own community, in the hope that they will continue to be engaged with their neighborhood as they mature. CSUN students worked alongside the 5th grade class to better understand the surrounding environment by gathering data relating to the sidewalk quality, cleanliness, tree coverage, land uses, and traffic safety. CSUN students also identified several constraints and opportunities for the children to vote on. This was done by cognitive mapping on poster boards presented by the CSUN student researchers. This project was a success for both parties as the 5th graders learned what college-level planning looks like, and the CSUN students got hands-on experience working alongside the community.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGES

After 50 years of service to the community, the U.S. Post Office on Reseda Blvd., adjacent to CSUN's campus, lost its lease on the property in May 2022 and has been demolished. The property has been purchased by the Symphony Development which plans to add 128 units of new housing. The four-story building will include ground-floor commercial uses, fitness rooms, a swimming pool, a rooftop deck, and a basement parking structure for up to 240 vehicles.



Symphony Northridge Student Apartments



CSBS SPOTLIGHT: BIKEFEST

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences held its first ever BikeFest for the general public this fall. The free on-campus event included bike and safety demos, bike vendors, food trucks, a costume group ride, an outdoor spin class, and giveaways! Even if you didn't ride a bike, any and all wheels were welcomed to roll whether a beginner or expert. All interior streets within campus were closed to vehicular traffic to ensure a safe riding experience during the festival. There also was a panel discussion, "Meet the Pros" with cycling professionals and representatives from the biking industry. The event promoted collaboration in the local cycling communities by bringing folks together to celebrate sustainability, fitness, and safety.



Yan Searcy, center, Dean of CSBS, leads a ride around campus at BikeFest on Sunday, Oct. 23, 2022.

URBAN PLANNING STUDENTS OF NORTHRIDGE (UPSN) SPOTLIGHT

APA Anaheim Conference

The APA, American Planning Association, held its California Conference in Anaheim this fall and several of our UPSN members attended. The annual conference theme was "Celebrating CommUNITY," which recognized the hard-won victories and achievements in planning that required collaboration, cooperation, and creative problem solving to navigate through the last few years. The in-person 2022 conference highlighted the long-awaited opportunity for the states planners to assemble, socialize, and reconnect with colleagues.



CSUN students pictured left to right: Jailah Smith, Alan Trujillo-Banuelos, Elizabeth Galbraith, and Jesus Trujillo-Garcia.

Getty Museum Visit

UPSN took a trip to the Getty Museum to see its newest exhibit, "Reinventing the Américas: Construct. Erase. Repeat." This exhibition analyzes representations of the Americas, questioning the mythologies and utopian visions that proliferated after the arrival of Europeans to the continent. It displays views of European chroniclers, illustrators, and printmakers from the 16th-19th centuries and offers diverse perspectives. The exhibition features artistic interventions by Denilson Baniwa, an indigenous contemporary artist from the Amazon region of Brazil and the voices of local community groups in Los Angeles.



Chimborazo Seen from the Plain of Tapia, Louis Bouquet.

"THE NEW HEART OF CAMPUS"



Exterior concept design for the New Heart of Campus at CSUN.

The University Student Union (USU) is being renovated and expanded with a new project that will include the construction of a 79,800 square foot facility and 49,900 square feet of renovated space. The new facility will include increased lounge and study spaces, outdoor shaded seating, enhanced food options, event and meeting spaces, entertainment and gaming spaces and a center for unity in race, intersectionality, social and environmental justice. The renovation will include updating the USU indoor and outdoor areas, meeting rooms, lounge and study spaces, while enhancing the student experience by centralizing student services and improving clubs and organizations' spaces. This new heart of campus will have a positive impact on student success and enhance the quality of life on campus for students and staff.

CTF EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM

The California Transportation Foundation (CTF) holds an annual Educational Symposium where students are paired with professionals in the field to share insights and opinions on the transportation industry. In total, 58 college students from throughout California were chosen to participate at the Irvine Marriott. This year three of our students, Hiba Al Hasanii, Said Al Rawahi, and Stephanie Banuelos all attended the Symposium. This two-day event included a Q&A panel discussion with an array of mentors, transportation trivia games, and a RFQ group competition that enabled students to work closely with the professionals to gain real life knowledge on solving transportation related problems. An overall successful and educational experience for the future of transportation planning.



CTF group photo of student attendees and mentors.

STUDENTS WIN MERRITT SCHOLARSHIP



We are thrilled to announce that Ali Day and Rebecca Swint were selected as 2022 Merritt Scholars. The Merritt Scholars Program is a statewide scholarship and mentorship program that attracts the next generation of affordable housing finance and development professionals. This program serves as an entry point into the housing industry, allowing students the ability to learn about the many career and development opportunities available. Ali and Rebecca will have access to a mentor, paid attendance at local and statewide industry conferences, and engagement with industry leaders. We are excited to see what opportunities this program provides for Ali and Rebecca; congratulations on this achievement!

RECENT FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

- Minassians, H. and Roy, R. (2022) "A panoramic "systems" approach to the Covid-19 Pandemic" pp. 35-51 in *Pandemics and Liberty*. Edited by Raymond J. March and Ryan M. Yonk. American Institute for Economic Research.
- Soruma, M. and Woldeamanuel, M. (2022) "The level of air quality at public transport stations: The Case of Torhailoch-Ayat main road in Addis Ababa", *Journal of Transport & Health* 24, 101328
- Woldeamanuel, M. Abebe, N. Supangkat, F. (2022) "Street vending on Addis Ababa's sidewalks: A sign of vibrancy and identity or a nuisance for pedestrians?", *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 1-18.
- Woldeamanuel, M. Romine, N. Olarte, A. (2022) "The role of nonprofit organizations in the expansion of inclusive transportation in Los Angeles", *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 1-15.
- Woldeamanuel, M. Obsie, A. Woldetensae, B. (2022) "Passengers' perception towards socioeconomic benefits of Addis Ababa light rail transit", *Case Studies on Transport Policy*, 10:1, pp. 198-207.



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**FIELD WORK, INTERNSHIPS,
AND APPLIED PLANNING**
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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 of home or e-mail address, 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.

Let us know if you have suggestions on how we can improve our newsletter. We hope to hear from you soon!

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.

Co-Editors: Stephanie Banuelos and Dr. Rob Kent

