



THE **URBS** POST

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

SPRING 2022

<i>Campus Spotlight</i>	2
<i>Community Partner</i>	2
<i>Spring '22 Graduates</i>	2
<i>Alumni Updates</i>	3
<i>Thank You Donors</i>	3
<i>Scholarship Winners</i>	3
<i>Master of Urban Planning</i>	3
<i>Contact Us</i>	4

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Paloma Giottonini, Ph.D.
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Craig Olwert, Ph.D.
Ward Thomas, Ph.D.
Zeynep Toker, Ph.D.
Mintesnot Wolde-amanuel, Ph.D.

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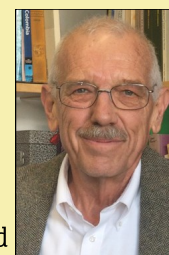


CHAIR'S MESSAGE: BACK ON CAMPUS

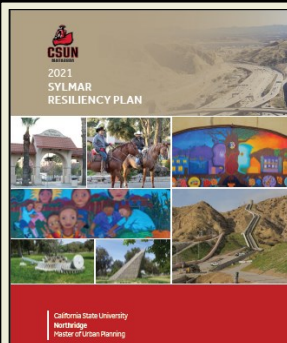
After nearly two years of virtual classes and remote learning, students, staff, and faculty returned to the CSUN campus and in-person classes for the Spring 2022 semester. There were some hiccups, most notably the postponement of the repopulation of campus for three weeks at the beginning of the semester because of a spike in Covid-19 cases after the holidays. Despite the return to in-person learning, the Covid-19 pandemic still impacts the campus. For instance face masks are required in all classes, buildings, and work places.

Welcomed by all, but especially graduating seniors, CSUN will again hold traditional graduation ceremonies in May of this year on the lawn in front of the University Libraries. Graduates will dress in traditional academic regalia and "walk" across the stage, receiving the well-deserved recognition and congratulations of their peers, professors, and family members.

We've learned a lot about teaching and learning from the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of those lessons will help faculty and students utilize technology more effectively in the classroom and remotely. Others will reinforce the importance of in-person learning and face-to-face interaction with one's colleagues and co-workers. But, we also know that it's not either, or. Rather it's all about utilizing the appropriate pedagogic tools at the right time and place.



MASTERS' PROJECT: SYLMAR RESILIENCY PLAN



The Masters of Urban Planning class of 2021 completed the Sylmar Resiliency Plan over the 2020 – 21 academic year. This purpose of this project was to assess the current state of Sylmar and work in partnership with the Sylmar Neighborhood Council and residents to develop a resiliency plan with recommendations that will help them recover from natural disasters and other stressors in the community. To assess resiliency, each student used multiple methods and techniques, including statistical analysis, historical and archival research, subject matter expert interviews, geographic information systems mapping, community surveys, and virtual workshops with community members and stakeholders. The graduate students created this plan as a tool for guiding future decision making.

PRESIDENT'S BECK APPOINTMENT

Ericka Beck, who served previously as president of CSU Channel Islands, was appointed President of CSUN in January of 2021. During her first 100 days in office, she held a virtual listening tour to get a feel for the issues that were important to the campus community. This led to the creation of "The Road Map to the Future," an initiative to determine campus priorities and develop "big ideas," as seen through an equity lens. Beck was formally invested as President in March 2022. The ceremony was themed "A Brighter and More Equitable Future". It took place in the Great Hall of the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts on the CSUN campus. The formal investiture included greetings from faculty, staff, students, Tataviam tribal leaders, and alumni. We are excited to see what CSUN's future holds with President Beck.



CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT– SIERRA ANNEX

Sierra Hall first opened its doors in 1963 and has welcomed tens of thousands of CSUN students to learn in its classrooms. As one of the university's oldest and largest academic buildings, Sierra Hall has been home to generations of student dreams, challenges, and successes. It houses many departments including urban studies and planning, anthropology, social work, geography, and political science. But after 50 years of service, it is time for renewal and renovations of the existing infrastructure. This will occur in part with the creation of a brand-new building called the Sierra Annex, sited just to the south of Sierra Hall.

The Sierra Annex will have classrooms and lecture halls for a new era. CSUN broke ground on the new 40,145-square-foot Sierra Annex this semester. The annex will add much-needed classrooms and lecture halls—including a 3,050-square-foot lecture hall, two smaller lecture halls and four seminar rooms. The \$49.9 million project is financed by CSU state funds.

The Sierra Annex's opening will clear the way for renovation for Sierra Hall because as classes shift into the new building, there is now more space for renovations to take place in Sierra Hall. Additionally, with more classrooms opening up in Sierra Hall, there are now more spaces that can be used as "swing space" for students. Faculty offices, laboratories, and administrative offices like ours will remain in Sierra Hall. We are excited to see how the Sierra Annex creates new spaces for students to learn and collaborate.



Architect's rendering of the planned Sierra Annex.

COMMUNITY PARTNER: CHATSWORTH PARK URBAN PLANNING MAGNET

Chatsworth Park Urban Planning Magnet Elementary School is situated in the northwest corner of the San Fernando Valley. It offers an innovative curriculum that focuses on equity, access, and collaboration with families and the community. The curriculum incorporates critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity, and focuses on how urban planners help communities become engaging places to grow up, play, live, and work. Chatsworth Park believes that an urban planning curriculum will foster community interaction, open-mindedness, and pride, helping students understand that young people are not only shaped by the environment they grow up in but also play an active role in shaping the environment today. The hope of the program is to create students that are empowered to become the influential voices of their community, taking on the roles of city planners, transportation planners, urban designers, and policy makers, applying their academic knowledge across a variety of demographic backgrounds and communities. Dr. Toker's graduate class will be partnering with this program for future projects. We are excited to see such an innovative program in our community working to educate and inspire the next generation of urban planners in the Los Angeles region.



GRADUATES OF SPRING 2022

B.A. in Urban Studies and Planning

Lizbeth Alcaraz	Rio Mateo
Jahaira Cardenas	David Moreno
Anthony Carlos	Kaung Naing
Alfonso Chairez	Erick Robles
Melanie Cruz	Ashley Ramos
Raylene Gonzalez	Aaron Smith
Angela Hernandez	Rebecca Swint
Juan Lopez	Kenny Uong
Rocio Martinez Coronado	

Masters of Urban Planning

Larbi Azzaz	Christina Richardson
Anthony Cabadas	Evan Sahagun
Yesenia Cruz Rios	Elias Salgado
Vanessa Diaz	Brittany Webber
Madison Dederick	
Tatianna Marin	
Steven Martinez	
Daniel Mick	
Luisa Negrete	
Katie O'connell	

ALUMNI UPDATES	SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS
<p>Diana Benitez (B.A.'14) is an Urban Planning Justice Manager for Just Cities in Berkeley, CA. In 2020, she received the APA California distinguished contribution award.</p> <p>Shelby Cramton (M.A.'17) is a Planner for the County of Santa Barbara.</p> <p>Euripedes De Oliveira (B.A.'00) is a lecturer for CSUN and UMass Amherst in Massachusetts.</p> <p>Mohamed Farrag (B.A.'21) is a general contractor in Los Angeles, CA.</p> <p>Adrian Flores (B.A.'19) is an Assistant Planner for the City of Bell Gardens.</p> <p>Charlotte Haskell (B.A.'79) is a manager of her own medical practice in Columbia, MD.</p> <p>Carlos Hernandez (B.A.'11) is a Senior Planner for Toole Design in Los Angeles, CA. He was also appointed to the City of San Fernando Transportation and Safety Commission.</p> <p>Kendall Irvin (B.A.'18) is an Assistant Planner I for the City of Santa Clarita.</p> <p>Silvia Jacobs (B.A.'14) is an Assistant Project Manager for the Robert Group in Los Angeles, CA.</p> <p>Larry Jenkins (B.A.'15) is a housing finance analyst for the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency. He has also earned his commercial real estate development certificate through Urban Land Institute project REAP.</p> <p>Andrew Kent (B.A.'14) is a Transportation Planner and GIS Analyst for the Ventura County Transportation Commission.</p> <p>Michael Levi (M.A.'20) is a Staff Planner for Meridian Consultants LLC.</p> <p>Silvia Luna (B.A.'09) is founder and principal attorney for Luna Legal Firm in Encino, CA.</p> <p>Rogelio Martinez (B.A.'16) is an Associate Planner II for the City of Bakersfield and helped complete the Bakersfield Affordable Housing Strategy Plan.</p> <p>Susana Martinez (B.A.'18) is an Associate Planner for the City of South Pasadena and is currently pursuing a Mas-</p>	<p>It's been another great year for scholarships in the Department Please join us in congratulating this year's scholarship winners:</p> <p>James Ring Graduate Scholarship: Timothy Halligan Evan Sahagun Elias Salgado Benjamin Uhrig Brittany Webber</p> <p>James Ring Undergraduate Scholarship: Stephanie Banuelos Rocio Coronado Levon Dahjet Raylene Gonzalez Jacob Hartmann Peter Kato Erick Robles Jailah Smith Rebecca Swint Kenny Uong</p> <p>Urban Studies and Planning Alumni Scholarship: Noah Laber Angelique Soliz</p> <p>Professor Warren Campbell Scholarship: Ricardo Leyva</p> <p>Paul T. Johnson Scholarship: Alexandra Day</p>
<p>ter's in Public Administration.</p> <p>Paul McClaren (B.A.'10) is an Associate Planner for the City of Camarillo.</p> <p>David Oulrey (B.A.'15) is an Associate Planner for the Sacramento County Planning and Environmental Review Division.</p> <p>Areli Perez (B.A.'18) is an Assistant Planner for the Town of Los Altos Hills.</p> <p>Cali Piccirillo (B.A.'19) is a project administrator for Pax Environmental, Inc. in Ojai, CA.</p> <p>Jacyln Rackerby (B.A.'19) is an associate planner for the City of Calabasas.</p> <p>Sofia Ramirez (M.A.'19) is a Mental Health Clinician for San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Clinic Van Nuys, CA. She recently received her associate clinical social worker registration.</p> <p>Heather Turpin (B.A.'20) is an AmeriCorps climate action corps fellow.</p> <p>Mecca Umazar (M.A.'19) is a Real Estate Portfolio Analyst for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington, DC.</p> <p>Joe Vacca (B.A.'97) is the Director of the community development department for the City of Camarillo.</p> <p>Anna Vidal (B.A.'92) is a City Planner for Los Angeles City Planning.</p>	<div data-bbox="609 1386 1102 1486"> <h2>THANK YOU!</h2> </div> <div data-bbox="609 1486 1102 1974"> <p>A big thank you to our generous donors:</p> <p>Mrs. Sandra Vaca-Roman ('92) Mr. Euripedes B. De Oliveira ('00) Ms. Diane S. Stephens ('08) Ms. Carol D. Hernandez ('79) Ms. Amy H. Nguyen ('11) Mr. Carlos Hernandez ('11) Mr. Andrew K Kent ('14) Mr. Joshua I. Van Gundy ('13)</p> <p>Your continued support does not go unnoticed.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1102 1386 1526 1974"> <div data-bbox="1112 1501 1315 1690"> </div> <p>Urban Planning Degree recently featured our Master of Urban Planning program as a part of the top 25 most affordable urban planning schools for 2022. We are proud that we are able to provide a program that is affordable and helps students further their career in planning. You can access the list on their website.</p> </div>



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**FIELD WORK, INTERNSHIPS,
AND APPLIED PLANNING**
In a Diverse, Dynamic Urban Region



Explore, Learn, and Practice
In a World Class City

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urban.studies@csun.edu

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<https://goo.gl/wPDBL>

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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: Dr. Rob Kent and Genesis Lozano

