

# 2014

## ANNUAL REPORT

### City & Regional Planning



School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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Our Mission it to educate the next generation of inspired urban planners and scholars, conduct research that influences planning policy and knowledge, and engage with partners in innovative local planning efforts.

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January 2015

Dear Alumni and Friends:

The Graduate Program in City & Regional Planning enters 2015 excited about new opportunities for education and new outlets for community engagement. This Annual Report allows us to reflect on our accomplishments from 2014 as we look ahead to the future together. We recognize the importance of maintaining relationships with our graduates and local planning professionals in order to accomplish our mission of: educating the next generation of inspired urban planners and scholars, conducting research that influences planning policy and knowledge, and engaging with partners in innovative planning efforts locally.

We hope you'll enjoy reviewing the highlights of our achievements in education and career placement, research, and community engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles A. Santo".

Charles A. Santo,  
Director  
Graduate Program in City & Regional Planning

## BY THE NUMBERS: Student Enrollment and Graduation Trends

The Graduate Program in City & Regional Planning awarded 10 master's degrees in 2014. Interest in our program continues to hold steady, with 14 new students entering the program in 2014. Our current total enrollment is 29, and our three-year average for annual new enrollment is 12, up from an average of 9 for the period between 2008 and 2011.

Over the past three years about a quarter of our new students have been Memphians and about half of our applicants and new students are from Tennessee. Typical undergraduate institutions include, the University of Memphis, Rhodes College, UT Knoxville, Mississippi State, and University of Arkansas. In recent years, we have also attracted students from the northwest (Tacoma, WA), northeast (Boston, MA), and midwest (Chicago, IL) and from fine institutions including Cornell University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Marquette, Clark, Pacific Lutheran, and Whitworth College.

**Spring & Fall 2014 Applied: 24 // Accepted: 18 // Enrolled: 12**

## PLACEMENT: Fellowships, Assistantships, and Alumni Job Notes

Thanks to an active agenda of funded research, we were able to support the majority of our students with Graduate Assistantships or Fellowship positions in 2014, allowing them to gain valuable practical experience and address planning problems in the City of Memphis. During 2014, five of our students participated in the Housing and Community Development Fellowship program, funded by the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development and the Graduate School at the University of Memphis.

### Our 2014-2015 Fellows are:

Bennett Smithhart.....	TIGUrS Garden
Ian Preston.....	Frayser CDC
Evan Morrison.....	Bridges USA
Josh Conley.....	City of Memphis, Chief Administrator's Office
Carly Haithcock.....	University Neighborhood Development Corporation

### *Other externally-funded placements include:*

Jonathan Spencer.....	MPO
Katie Buchl.....	Community LIFT
Robert Baxter.....	Office of Sustainability

### Congratulations to our 2014 Graduates:

Gene Burse  
Austin Cardosi  
Jordan Exantus  
Robert Harper  
Aarti Sharma

Amy Donaghey (Collier)  
Austin Johnson  
Bridget McCall  
Jim McDougal  
Katie McKeel

A number of our recent graduates started or advanced in their planning careers during 2014 with new and challenging positions. Jordan Exantus (2014) moved to the Washington D.C. area for a position as Planner Coordinator at The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Austin Johnson (2014) and Allison Eddins (2012), both former HCD Fellows with the Frayser CDC, each made a cross country move to set up our Alaskan alumni branch. Austin was hired as Planning and GIS Technician by the City of Soldotna, AK and Allison took a Planner I position in Juneau. Amy Collier (2014) stayed close to home taking a position as Community Health Planner at Shelby County Health Department. John Paul Shaffer (2010) was hired on as the new Program Director at Livable Memphis, where he is joined by recent graduate Gene Burse (2014), who serves as a Program Coordinator. John Zeanah (2005) advanced with the Memphis and Shelby County Office of Sustainability as the Administrator after Paul Young (2004) transitioned to Shelby County Government as the Director of Legislative Affairs. Jordan Hillman (2011) moved from the Canton, MS Chamber of Commerce to take on the role of Community Development Director at City of Brandon, MS and Austin Cardosi (2014) continues his position as Planning Director for the City of Horn Lake.

## INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS: Catania, Sicily

The program organized a second study abroad exchange in Sicily, partnering with faculty and students at the University of Catania and the grassroots community organization ViviSimeto. Led by Antonio Raciti and Charlie Santo, the 10-day summer field experience allowed six Memphis planning students to work side-by-side with local community leaders as well as students and researchers to conduct landscape analyses, host community mapping events and prepare planning documents. These activities supported the expansion of an innovative regional river agreement held between multiple communities to guide future, environmentally sensitive planning along Sicily's Simeto River Valley.



# FACULTY HIRE: Dr. Antonio Raciti



Despite university wide budget shortfalls, the Division was able to make a key hire in 2014, adding Antonio Raciti as our newest tenure-track Assistant Professor. Dr. Raciti, who holds a Ph.D. in Architectural Engineering and City Planning from the University of Catania, brings strengths in environmental planning, design, and participatory planning. He has been with the program since 2012 as a Visiting Assistant Professor teaching our Comprehensive Planning and Project Planning studio courses, as well as seminars in urban design and urban ecology.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Faculty and students in the Graduate Program in City & Regional Planning continue to seek connections between research and practice, fostering mutually beneficial relationships between the University and its community.

### MEMPHIS SLIM COLLABORATORY

After years of planning and grant-seeking and months of redevelopment, the Memphis Slim Collaboratory opened in April 2014 during the annual Stax to the Max festival. The former home of blues legend Memphis Slim was redeveloped as a music-centered community space for artistic collaboration, music training and storytelling.

Members of Slim's family came from Chicago and California to attend the opening reception and honor the music legend. The membership-based Collaboratory, managed by two full-time staff, is equipped with video-casting rooms to record oral histories, and is anchored by a recording studio. The studio is run on a cooperative basis to support emerging artists as well as apprentices learning the production business.



The building was designed by br3gs Architects and has been recognized with numerous awards, including: American Institute of Architect's TN Award of Merit, Builder Magazine's Builder's Choice Award, and American-Architect's Building of the Week. Grant funding from ArtPlace America and the Kresge Foundation supported the redevelopment and staffing of the Collaboratory.

The project is an outcome of the Memphis Music Magnet plan, which was developed by community partners, industry stakeholders, and students in two special topics courses led by Charlie Santo in 2008 and 2009. The plan builds on the cultural assets and heritage of the Soulsville USA neighborhood and seeks to create a community where music and art tell stories, activate spaces, reclaim vacant buildings, create interaction, and connect neighbors new and old.

## WEST MEMPHIS ECOPARK

Awarded a Memphis Regional Greenprint Plan planning sub-grant, Antonio Raciti, in partnership with the City of West Memphis, completed plans for the West Memphis EcoPark. The Spring 2014 Project Planning Studio course guided the process of planning for a greenspace amenity on undeveloped land at the western terminus of the Harahan Bridge. The EcoPark is designed to complement Big River Crossing, which will convert a portion of the Harahan Bridge over the Mississippi into a bicycle and pedestrian pathway.



## BIKE FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL REVIEW

Memphis' Bikeway/Pedestrian Program Manager and University of Memphis planning alumnus, Kyle Wagenschutz, served as adjunct faculty member for the Division in the fall of 2014, leading a Project Planning Studio course focused on bicycling improvements in and around the university. Students prepared an application to the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) to certify the University of Memphis as a Bike Friendly University and developed a set of short-term and long-term recommendations. The classroom approach to preparing the BFU application has been adopted as a best practice by LAB and has become a model for other universities.



## GREEN MACHINE MOBILE FOOD MARKET

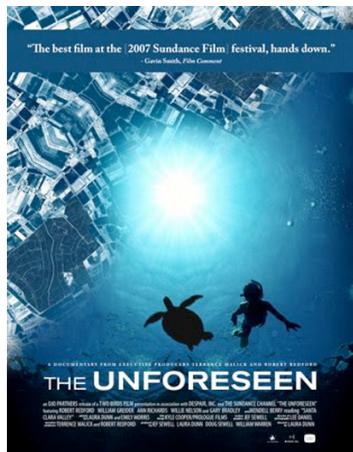
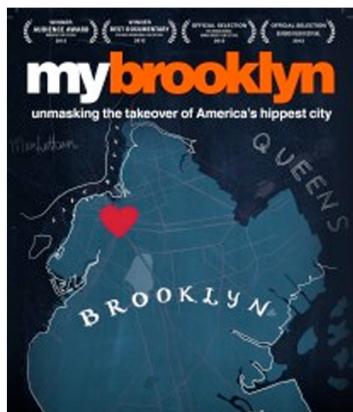
The Green Machine Mobile Food Market, launched through the cooperative efforts of St. Patrick Community Outreach Center, the Vance Avenue Collaborative and the Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning, is nearing the end of its second year of operation. The Green Machine, designed to bring high quality and affordable fresh fruits and vegetables to the seventy communities in Memphis lacking a full-service supermarket, has been a welcome addition to Memphis' growing food security and local foods movements.

During the Green Machine's first eighteen months of operation it has made more than 1,200 stops, attracted more than 35,000 customers, and sold more than \$75,000 in fresh produce. In addition to selling fresh fruits and vegetables, The Green Machine distributes information, in the form of video, pamphlets, factsheets, and recipe cards on the critical relationship between healthy eating and living! Through the efforts of the department, the Southwest Community College and University of Memphis Nursing Programs have begun to place students on the bus to act as health and nutrition guides.



## EVENTS

The Planning Student Organization (PSO) hosted two film screening panels in 2014, featuring Kelly Anderson's *My Brooklyn* in February and Laura Dunn's *The Unforseen* in October.



- *My Brooklyn* addresses gentrification and offers an unbiased account of those who both criticize and champion the way Brooklyn is becoming "America's hippest city." The screening was followed by a lively dialogue between local professionals and experts in the field to discuss how cities change and what or who determines their future. Moderated by Tommy Pacello of the Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team, the panelist included Local Entrepreneur, Taylor Berger; University Neighborhood District Community Redevelopment Liaison, Leah Dawkins; Planning Professor, Ken Reardon; and Todd Richardson, Assistant Professor of Art History at U of M and Co-director of Crosstown Arts.
- *The Unforeseen* depicts the tension generated when a proposed real estate development in Austin threatens a valued natural area and asks, "what are we willing to give up in the name of growth?" The discussion following the screening offered diverse perspectives on the intersection of urban growth, environmental protection and cherished public amenities. Moderated by the PSO, the panelists included Larry Smith, Supervisor of Shelby County Air Quality Improvement Branch and Former Executive Director of Wolf River Conservancy; Jessica Buttermore, CRP alumna and President of Citizens to Preserve Overton Park; Dr. Kathryn Hicks, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Memphis; and Steve Auterman, planner and designer at Looney Ricks Kiss.

## FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP: Highlights

Throughout 2014 Memphis planning faculty continued their contribution to the profession's field of knowledge.

Antonio Raciti and Charlie Santo represented the Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning at the 54th Annual Conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) held in Philadelphia.

Ken Reardon neared completion of his reflective book on the groundbreaking work he led in East St. Louis in his tenure at the University of Illinois. *Look for Wading in the Water: The Emergence of Empowerment Planning in East St. Louis, IL, 1990-2000* on bookshelves in 2015. Dr. Reardon also completed a co-edited volume with John Forrester of Cornell on work in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. *Pursuing Equity Planning in the Crescent City: Reflections upon the New Orleans Planning Initiative* is set for a release this spring.

Charlie Santo extended his research around school system consolidation with a contribution to an interdisciplinary look at the lessons and implications of the Memphis City/Shelby County Schools' merger, with an analysis of the role of spatial segregation and fiscal conflict in Shelby County. This chapter will appear in *The Dynamics of School District Consolidation: Race, Economics & the Politics of Educational Change*, to be published by University of Tennessee Press.

Antonio Raciti has written about his work in the Simeto River Valley and the Vance Avenue neighborhood (with Ken Reardon and Katherine Lambert-Pennington) for publication in Journal of Landscape Research and Cities. Raciti is also set to contribute new research on food insecurity in two forthcoming books: The Handbook of Community Well-being, edited by Rhonda Philips and Cecilia Wong; and Memphis Barbecue Tofu: Foodways, Culture, and Identity in the Mid-South, edited by Wanda Rushing and Michele Scott.

Dr. Reza Banai contributed to the Journal of Sustainability Education with an article titled, "Urban Sprawl: Definitions, Data, Methods of Measurement, and Environmental Consequences."

Extending their scholarly activities, our faculty also served as peer revieweres for the following publications:

- Journal of American Planning Association
- Journal of Planning Education and Research
- Journal of Urban Affairs
- Growth and Change
- Open Environmental Sciences
- Journal of Urbanism
- Environmental Management
- Journal of Infrastructure Systems
- International Journal of Technology

## AWARDS & ACCOLADES

The students of Charlie Santo's 2014 Planning and the Metro Economic class won the Tennessee chapter of the American Planning Association's Outstanding Planning Award for a Student Project. Their project, "Urban and Suburban Inequality: A Memphis Case Study," is an eight-minute video primer on the relationship between policy, development patterns, and geographic disparity. The video can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.memphis.edu/planning/>.

CRP alumnus Tommy Pacello (2012) was honored as one of Urban Land Institute's Top 40 under 40. Tommy was selected based on his contributions to responsible land use serving as Senior Project Manager on the Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team where he helped launch the MEMfix and MEMshop "previtalization" strategies used to reanimate and reveal the potential of some of Memphis' neglected urban neighborhoods.

The annual American Institute of Certified Planners' 2014 Outstanding Student Award was issued to Katie McKeel and the Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning's Public Service Award was issued to Bridget McCall.

## WHATS NEXT?

### PSO SPRING BIKE FESTIVAL

Building on the work completed in Special Projects Studio, to apply for Bike Friendly University certification, the Planning Student Organization will host a campus Spring Bike Festival. The festival will coincide with the university's annual earth day celebration that is hosted by the Tigurs Urban Garden and the Department of Sustainability. The implementation of this event is made possible by funding competitively awarded to the PSO through the University's Green Fee Committee.

## LAUNCHING THE NEW UofM DESIGN COLLABORATIVE

The creation of the University of Memphis Design Collaborative (UMDC) represents an evolution of the Memphis Regional Design Center (MRDC), which was originally formed in 2007 as a stand-alone non-profit design center in which the University was a partner. As the result of a strategic planning process, the design center is transitioning from a stand-alone structure to a university-based center that will have a continuing partnership with a community non-profit board. Consistent with the University's mission, the UMDC will provide design education, research and outreach. Its home within the University provides a sustainable platform with appropriate technical expertise and structure to support those activities, while continued partnership with a community board will provide access to the private and non-profit design expertise in the area. The result will be a unique blend of university and community resources to strengthen design activities in the region.

We will facilitate a series of public events in the spring of 2015 to gather input that will guide the launch of the new UMDC with a renewed public presence. The events will involve a broad set of community stakeholders, set the direction of the Design Collaborative, and generate summary reports that identify key research tasks for the work ahead. The UMDC will be introduced as an entity that comprehensively connects building and site design to community improvement and will be supported by the kind of collaboration that a university setting can facilitate.

We envision at least four public dialogue events to correlate with broad theme areas (ie. transportation and land use, place making, healthy communities, neighborhood revitalization) that will set the tone for a more comprehensive approach to planning for a city we all love.

# Graduate Program in City & Regional Planning ANNUAL REPORT **2014**

## Keep in touch

If you have a new address, or any news you would like included in a future Annual Report or newsletter, or posted on our website, please contact us at [cityplanning@memphis.edu](mailto:cityplanning@memphis.edu) or by phone at 901.678.2161.

You can also follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/crp.memphis> or join our group on LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/University-Memphis-City-Regional-Planning-3960776>

## Support the Graduate Program

If you would like to make a contribution to support the efforts of the Graduate Program in City & Regional Planning, you can do so online at [www.memphis.edu/giving](http://www.memphis.edu/giving) (be sure to specify the City & Regional Planning Foundation Fund 20729) or mail your contribution, payable to The University of Memphis Foundation\*, to:

City & Regional Planning  
208 McCord Hall, University of Memphis  
Memphis, TN 3815

\*\*be sure to indicate in the Memo line that the donation is to Fund 20729, City and Regional Planning

## Faculty and Staff

Charles A. Santo, Associate Professor and Director

Reza Banai, Professor

Antonio Raciti, Assistant Professor

Kenneth M. Reardon, Professor

Susan L. Roakes, Associate Professor

Jessica A. Buttermore, Administrative Associate

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