

## Note from the Editor

It is with a very sad heart that I open this Editorial with a note on the passing of our very dear friend and colleague Walt Tryon, professor of Landscape Architecture. Walt taught at Cal Poly for more than 30 years, and he was a much respected educator, an excellent designer, and a beloved colleague. His interdisciplinary, holistic, and spiritual approach to practice and teaching captivated students and faculty alike. My colleagues in the City and Regional Planning Department and myself who were fortunate enough to work with Walt will miss him, but will always have him in hearts and soul. We wanted to pay homage to Walt's memory in this Editorial section by including a beautiful poem dedicated to him by his colleague and friend William MacElroy, of the Landscape Architecture Department.

The FOCUS Special Events section this year starts with an overview of the International Symposium on Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Regeneration Planning, by BSCR student Christina Batteate. This important event, organized by William Siembieda and Ken Topping of the City and Regional Planning Department, attracted participants and professionals from various countries, who discussed what is perhaps the biggest challenge of contemporary urban development: how do we build more disaster resistant communities and provide safer places for people? This is indeed an enormous challenge in today's urban world threatened by all sorts of high-risk situations in the rise: global warming, rapid urban growth and speculative development, pollution, deforestation, and, on top of all that, terrorism and other man-spurred "disasters" triggered by poverty and hunger. This article is appropriately followed by Flavio Malta's brief account on his work as a city planner in Brazil, and the difficulties with dealing with the conditions of poverty and squatter settlements in an area which is environmentally protected and dependent on tourism.

Readers will find very different and interesting papers in the Essays section. Tom Jones, Dean of Cal Poly's College of Architecture and Environmental Design, points out the economic and social advantages of compact urban oriented housing in California, and suggests a typology of urban and in-country housing choices towards this goal. Paul Wack, associate professor at CRP, writes about his long-term association with the Sustainable Environments minor, and reviews the evolution of what has evolved as the most popular minor in the College, and commenting on some of its most important aspects. The next two articles are by CRP's newest faculty, Cornelius Nuworsoo and Umut Toker, who joined us last fall to cover community design and transportation, respectively. Nuworsoo writes about a city-wide transit system he developed and is helping implement in Accra, capital of Ghana, his native country. Joined by planner Zeynep Toker, Umut writes about the evolution of the garden city concept through a discussion of Hampstead Garden Suburb, London.

The section on Student Work begins with the proud announcement that Cal Poly graduate student team won the 2005 Bank of America Low-Income Housing Challenge, upsetting strong teams from Berkeley and Stanford! Traditionally spearheaded by CRP and coached by assistant professor D.Gregg Doyle, the team proposed the rehabilitation of Oak Park, originally built in WWII as temporary military housing and owned by the Paso Robles Housing Authority. Next, the importance of the community-outreach pedagogy and the effects of class projects is discussed by Doreen Liberto-Blanck, a CRP lecturer and community development director for King City, CA. Located in the Salinas Valley, this agricultural community is facing complex land use and environmental problems related to urban growth and development pressure from Salinas, Monterey, and Silicon Valley workers. Expanding on CRP's collaboration with King City, Nuworsoo and Topping write an account on their graduate planning studio which is currently developing a series of in-depth studies and visioning community workshops towards a draft community plan. The student work section follows with a graduate project for the revitalization of a riverfront site in Redding, CA, which has gained client and community support, a review of the CRP student entry in the Cool Cities Urban Design Competition (Jackson, MI), an article on a concept plan for Katrina-stricken Pascagoula, and another on the partial results of this year's community planning lab which is working in collaboration with Crawford, Multari & Clark and the City of Ventura, CA.

The CRP tradition of international work is represented in this issue by an important collaborative process which lead to a concept plan for the sustainable development of the town of Copan and its Mayan temple archeological site, designated a

world heritage site by UNESCO. Graduate student Richard Rojas writes about this collaborative project with Cal Poly's Landscape Architecture Department, the Centro de Diseño, Arquitectura y Construction, and the Ministry of Tourism in Honduras. Closing this section, Cal Poly students write about their life enriching experiences in participating in CRP's exchange programs and studying in Brazil and Honduras.

This issue's Spotlight section begins with a great interview with CRP alumni Nick Saskell, Clark Williams, Colleen Hart, and Sierra Russell, who form EDAW's Planning and Urban Design Studio in the San Francisco area. They talk about their undergraduate learning experiences, how they relate to their day-to-day work, and what students should be better prepared for the real world. Chris Jordan, a recent CRP graduate and FOCUS assistant editor for the first two issues, writes about life after Cal Poly and the application of the knowledge he gained as a planning student.

I hope you enjoy the 2006 edition of FOCUS. Inevitably, for all of us who joined forces to make this edition happen it has been hard work, but lots of fun. It is rewarding to see a journal taking shape, meeting its mission, expanding its horizons, and being able to contribute to city and regional planning. We are always open to your participation and suggestions.

**Vicente del Rio**

*PhD; Professor*

*City and Regional Planning Department*

*Cal Poly San Luis Obispo*