

IOWA PLANNING



American Planning Association
Iowa Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association

NOVEMBER 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Message 2

2011 Great Places
in America 3

2011 Upper Mid-
west Conference
Student Poster
Winners 4

Zoners Corner 5

Five Recognized for
2011 APA Iowa
Planning Awards 6

Upper Midwest
Conference a Big
Success! 7

Upcoming Events 7

Ask the Planner 8

Meet the Planner 8



Upper Midwest Conference a Big Success!

Submitted by Matt Flynn, AICP



Chris Leinberger, Brookings Institute during the Awards Luncheon, Thursday, October 20, 2011



APA Iowa and the City of Davenport hosted the 2011 Upper Midwest Conference October 19-21. "MOTATE: Transportation and Mobility in the Green Era", attracted nearly 280 attendees from eight states.

On Wednesday, the conference opened with orientation tours of much of the riverfront from Davenport and Rock Island all the way past I-80 and LeClaire and Rapids City. In the afternoon AICP members were scooping up needed CM's by attending the Law Session, conducted by Gary Taylor, AICP and the Ethics Session shared by AICP President Anna Breinich, AICP, and Eric Lundy, AICP. Following a lively discussion during the FAICP roundtable, attendees gathered at the Blackhawk Bowl and Martini Lounge before venturing out into the crisp October evening.



Chad Pregracke signs copies of his book following his closing keynote at the Upper Midwest Planning Conference October 21, 2011.

Thursday, typically the busiest day of the conference, included mobile workshops, up to 4 sessions to choose from at any time, and a great presentation from our keynote speaker, Christopher Leinberger from the Brookings institution. The day was capped off with an elegant reception at the beautiful Figge Art Museum in Downtown Davenport.

No doubt the highlight Friday was the inspiring talk by Chad Pregracke, President and Founder of Living Lands and Waters. A native Quad Citian, Chad spoke of his simple, humble mission to clean up one stretch of the Mississippi one pop can and barrel at a time; now expanded to several rivers and a network of tens of thousands of volunteers.

(Continued on Page 7)

President's Message

Greetings Iowa Planners!

WOW! What a National Community Planning Month it has been within the State of Iowa! The wonderful month kicked off on October 4th, 2011 with the announcement of the 2011 APA Great Places designations. Over the previous four years of the program, Iowa previously had no designations under this prestige program, however that changed greatly this year with the Great Neighborhood designation for the City of Davenport's Gold Coast-Hamburg Historic District and the Great Public Spaces designation for the City of Des Moines' Gray's Lake Park. Two truly deserving designations recognizing the long term benefits of strong planning! If you are interested in nominating another Great Iowa Place through this program for 2012, please let me know and I'll be happy to coordinate your nomination with National APA.

National Community Planning Month continued October 19th-21st as APA Iowa and the City of Davenport welcomed more than 280 planners from 8 states for the Upper Midwest APA Regional Planning Conference. THANK YOU to all who attended, spoke, sponsored or were a part of the Planning Committee. In addition to the conference we recognized the 2011 APA Iowa Award Winners and the 9 students who submitted posters as part of the Student Poster Contest.

National Community Planning Month concluded in Iowa October 23rd-27th as a team of economic development experts, led by Wayne Feiden, FACIP converged in Story County as part of AICP's Community Planning Assistance Team program. In these intensive few days the team studied the issues and developed recommendations and a framework for Story County to move forward on. Story County was the second location selected nationwide in this assistance program!

Thank you for those of you who voted in the recent Chapter Elections! We utilized APA's electronic balloting this year resulting in 104 ballots returned (25.1%). Congratulations to those elected – J. Benjamin Champ, AICP, ASLA, Vice President, Charlie Dissell, AICP, Secretary and Melissa Tiedemann, AICP, Treasurer. Along with Rich Russell, AICP, President-Elect, the newly elected will take office on March 1, 2012. Please join me in thanking them for their willingness to commit the time necessary to serve our Chapter.

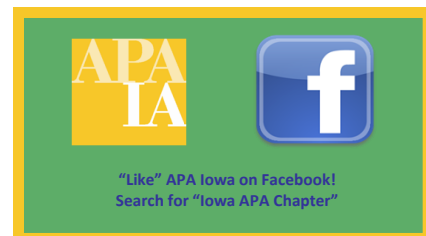
APA President, Mitch Silver, AICP has challenged all planners across the country to the following motto, "Lead, Innovate and Inspire." Clearly October has been a successful month for that in Iowa. I would challenge all of you to continue to share the planning message and to "Lead, Innovate and Inspire" everyday in your own communities. A critical way we can all do that is through better communication of the planning message and I would encourage you to utilize the resources that APA is making available through toolkits and webinars as part of their Communications Boot Camp. More information is available on the APA website, <http://www.planning.org/policy/communicationsbootcamp/>.

Finally and as always, if you have any comments, suggestions or questions about APA Iowa or would like to volunteer to assist the Chapter in any way, please don't hesitate to contact me or any member of the APA Iowa Board.

Best wishes,

David R. Wilwerding, AICP
APA Iowa President
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515-727-7775

*"I would challenge
all of you to
continue to share
the planning
message and to
"Lead, Innovate and
Inspire" everyday in
your own
communities."*



2011 Great Places in America

Submitted by David Wilwerding, AICP

Several years ago the American Planning Association embarked upon an effort to promote the practice of good planning beyond the planning community, in an effort to make the general public aware of APA and how planners and planning efforts improve the everyday quality of life in communities. The outcome of this effort was the creation of the Great Places in America program to celebrate places of exemplary character, quality and planning. Truly a program that honors great places and garners excitement generated around the importance of planning.

These great places selected in the categories of Great Streets, Great Public Spaces and Great Neighborhoods are intended to be the gold standard in terms of having a true sense of place, cultural and historical interest, community involvement and a vision for tomorrow. The places recognized are the places where people want to be, not only to visit, but to live and work every day. Since the great places program has been in existence only 50 Neighborhoods, 50 Streets and 40 Public Spaces have been granted the prestigious designation of an APA Great Place. Iowa was fortunate in 2011 to receive two designations under this program:



Davenport's Gold Coast-Hamburg Historic District 2011 APA Great Neighborhood

In granting the Gold Coast Hamburg Neighborhood this distinction the APA noted some of the following characteristics that distinguish this neighborhood,

- Outstanding architecture
- Diverse group of residents and organizations dedicated to enriching and strengthening the neighborhood fabric
- In the 1980's urban pioneers gravitated to the neighborhood to begin a period of revitalization, reclaiming the streetscape, limiting demolitions, moving a historic home and landscaping vacant lots.
- The residents of the Gold Coast Hamburg have earned a reputation for community volunteerism and leadership, serving on city commissions, committees and the city council.

Des Moines' Gray's Lake Park 2011 APA Great Public Space

APA singled out Gray's Lake Park for its thoughtful transformation, spanning nearly five decades, from quarry to park. The 167-acre park's unique physical features, connections with city, region and national trail networks, amenities and community support have made it one of the most frequented places in Iowa.

The city's best-known and most-visited recreation area, the park has unique qualities and features that prove to be popular regardless of the time of day or season of the year. The iconic, 1,400-foot-long



Kruidenier Trail pedestrian bridge over the lake is the park's most distinguishing feature. Built in 2000, the bridge completes the lake's circumferential trail and provides the park's best views of the downtown skyline. Even more dramatic at night, the bridge comes to life as a rainbow of colors lights up its 16-foot-wide pathway and reflects off the glass panel railings.

For more information about these and the other 2011 Great Places, please visit, <http://www.planning.org/greatplaces/>.

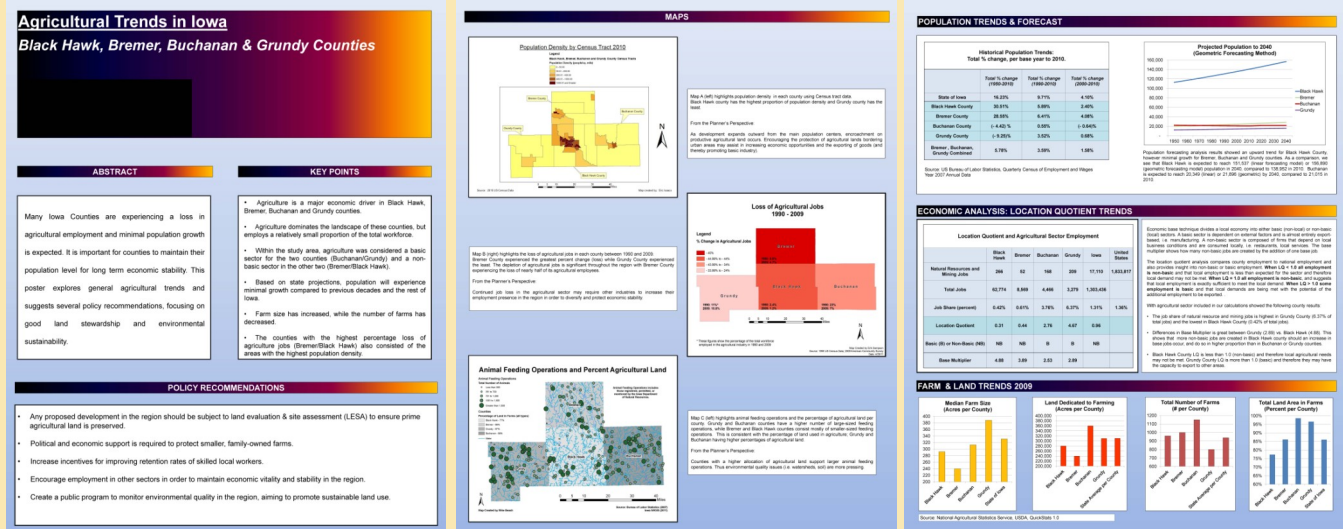


2011 Upper Midwest Conference Student Poster Winners

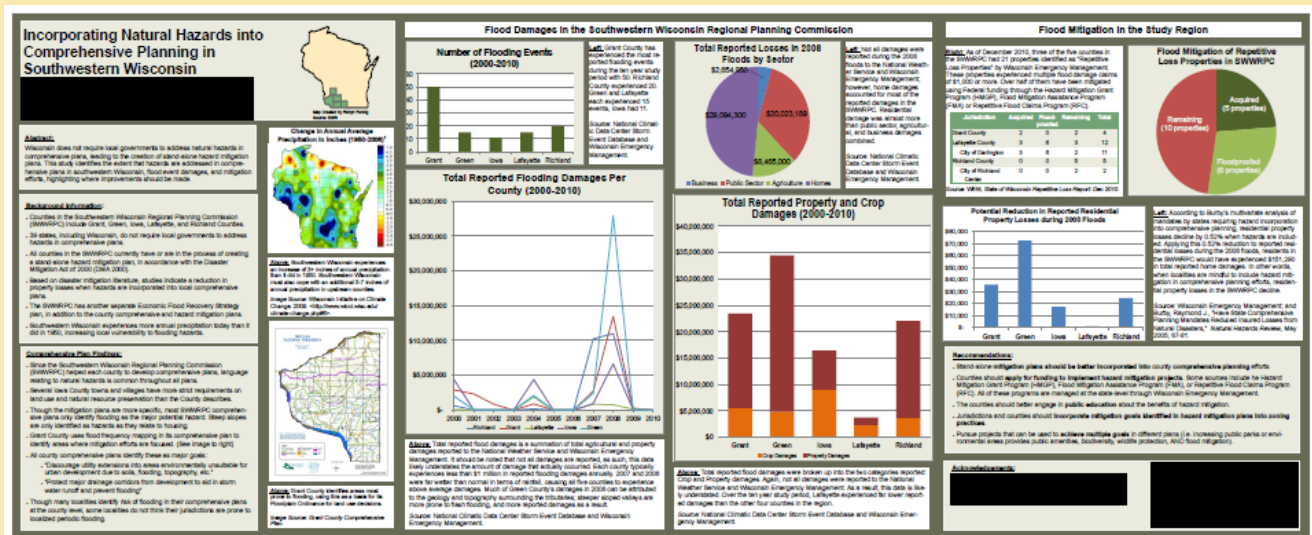
Submitted by Naomi Hamlett, AICP

Six posters were submitted to the third annual APA-Iowa Student Poster Contest. This year's first prize winners, a team of four consisting of Michael Beach, Eric Isaacs, Emma Papworth, and Eric Sampson won \$750 in prize money (pictured below). The second place winner, Robyn Fennig, received \$250 (pictured below). In addition, all students who submitted a poster received free attendance to the 2011 Upper Midwest conference in Davenport, IA.

Thanks to the jurors who helped select the winners: Melissa Edsill Tiedemann, AICP, Stanley Consultants; Tim Andera, City of Waterloo; Tricia Sandahl, City of Mason City; and Kara Tragesser, AICP, City of West Des Moines. To view all six submissions visit: <http://www.iowa-apa.org/index.php?id=83>.



First Prize Winner: Michael Beach, Eric Isaacs, Emma Papworth and Eric Sampson



Second Prize Winner: Robyn Fennig

THE ZONER'S CORNER

'The Zoner's Corner' will be an ongoing column that consists of zoning articles and correspondence. The column presents issues, initiatives, suggestions, questions or comments specific to zoning. If you have a piece of writing or question which relates to zoning that you would like to share with Iowa Planners, feel free to contact Carissa Miller at cmiller@midascog.net.

The SmartCode and Affordable Housing

Previously Published in Breakthroughs, January 2011

More and more communities across the nation are eschewing traditional zoning codes in favor of smart growth codes, such as form-based codes, traditional neighborhood designs, and transit-oriented developments. The SmartCode, originally developed by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, is a model form-based code that promotes sustainable development by encouraging a mix of uses, diverse housing options at all income levels, open space preservation, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that reduce automobile dependency. Unlike conventional zoning, the SmartCode model combines zoning, subdivision regulations, urban design standards, and infrastructure requirements into one regulating document. The one-stop ordinance generates predictability and timeliness, ultimately lowering development costs in the approval process. Since 2003, when the SmartCode was first unveiled, more than 40 municipalities have adopted

Affordable Housing

The SmartCode is based on six transect zones ranging from "Natural" to "Urban Core". A mix of uses and housing types are required in most of the zones. In addition, the code also allows for the development of accessory dwelling units and other affordable housing provisions within the transect zones. This article takes a brief look at some of the communities that have recently adopted a SmartCode with added provisions for affordable housing development.

Jamestown, Rhode Island. In a 2007 report that put forth the community's vision for future growth, Jamestown residents identified affordable housing as a critical component. The report contained strategies to increase the area's affordable housing supply, including the adoption of a SmartCode that would allow for higher densities and mixed uses. In October 2009, Jamestown, a small island located in the middle of Narragansett Bay, adopted a calibrated version of the SmartCode. The code is mandatory for the town's Special Development District, which includes areas of the Island that can support higher densities. Within this district, accessory dwelling units are allowed as an affordable housing option. The accessory units must be deed-restricted so as to remain affordable. Additionally, the code allows reduced minimum lot sizes to accommodate affordable housing. The smaller lots are required to be part of a land trust and are tied to a ground lease or deed restricted for a period of 99 years.

Ridgeland, South Carolina. Following a public charette and visioning process, Ridgeland adopted its version of the SmartCode in March 2010. The mandatory SmartCode aims to retain the town's character and accommodate growth in a sustainable manner. The code includes provisions to encourage affordable housing, such as priority processing and expedited approval. Highest priority is given to affordable housing projects that are developed in partnership with a community land trust or nonprofit housing agency. Additionally, the town offers density bonuses and parking reductions for affordable housing units located within one quarter mile of a transit stop.

Flagstaff, Arizona. The "City of Pines" is currently in the process of updating its zoning code to better promote smart growth development. The new zoning ordinance will feature transect zones, form-based development regulations, and sustainability principles. Various affordable housing incentives will be consolidated under the new code. The Traditional Neighborhood District (TND) that Flagstaff adopted in 2007 is expected to remain largely unchanged in the new ordinance. Modeled after the SmartCode, the TND applies to new and infill developments that incorporate mixed uses, higher densities, and traditional neighborhood design elements. Incentives to encourage affordable housing include expedited permitting, fee waivers, and reduced parking requirements. The most recent development under the city's TND features 125 permanently affordable units on 27 acres that are part of the city's land trust. The land will remain under city ownership and the homes will be available for residents making between 80 and 150 percent of the area median income.

Conclusion

Ensuring the availability of diverse housing options for all ages and income levels is an integral component of the SmartCode. The regulatory flexibility and streamlined approval process offered by the code can help lower housing development costs and increase affordability. The code, which can be adapted to meet specific needs of a community, is becoming increasingly popular with local governments intent on promoting sustainable growth and affordable living.

Five Recognized for 2011 APA Iowa Planning Awards

Naomi Hamlett, AICP

Excellence Award for Best Practice – City of Davenport – “Davenport in Motion”



Pictured above: David Wilwerding, AICP; Clayton Lloyd - Steering Committee Member; Darrin Nordahl - City Designer and Project Manager, City of Davenport; Bill Gluba - Mayor of Davenport; and Naomi Hamlett, AICP.

Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan – City of Ankeny and RDG Planning & Design – “Ankeny Comprehensive Plan”



Pictured above: David Wilwerding, AICP; John Peterson, AICP, City of Ankeny; Gary Lozano, AICP, RDG; and Naomi Hamlett, AICP.

Excellence Award for Public Outreach – City of Davenport – “Davenport NEW/Planning Area 2 Action Plan”



Pictured above: David Wilwerding, AICP; PJ Slobjan – Steering Committee member, President of the Gold-Coast Historic Hamburg Neighborhood Association; Alderman Bill Boom; Scott Koops - Planner I, City of Davenport; Roy Dewitt - Neighborhood Services Specialist, City of Davenport; and Naomi Hamlett, AICP.

Each year, the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-Iowa) asks its more than 350 members to nominate plans, projects, and individuals deserving recognition by the professional organization. Award nominees can be recognized in thirteen categories ranging from planning excellence to distinguished leadership. Based on an independent review by a jury of professional planners from the Nebraska Chapter of the APA, the following award recipients were honored for their achievements during this year's Awards Lunch, which was held in conjunction with the APA Upper Midwest Conference in the Quad Cities.

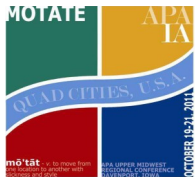
- Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan – *City of Ames, City of Gilbert, Story County* – “Ames Urban Fringe Plan and 28E Implementation Agreement”
- Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan – *City of Ankeny and RDG Planning & Design* – “Ankeny Comprehensive Plan”
- Excellence Award for Best Practice – *City of Davenport* – “Davenport in Motion”
- Excellence Award for Public Outreach – *City of Davenport* – “Davenport NEW/Planning Area 2 Action Plan”
- Distinguished Leadership Award for a Planning Advocate – *Mayor Roy D. Buol, City of Dubuque*

Congratulations to the award recipients! Please congratulate them on their accomplishments as you network with them throughout the year. More information about these particular award-winning projects and individuals can be found on APA-Iowa's website - www.iowa-apa.org – under “Current News.”



Upper Midwest Conference a Big Success!

(continued)



In all, the conference received high marks from nearly all attendees. In particular, one 'veteran' participant noted "the Conference just kept getting better and better each day, fantastic job!"

To the RiverCenter, Radisson Quad City Plaza Hotel, host committee, presenters, and record number of sponsors (displayed below), and attendees, THANK YOU!



Conference Co-Chair Matt Flynn addresses the crowd during the Awards Luncheon, Thursday, October 20, 2011

2011 Upper Midwest APA Conference Sponsors

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It's not too late to have your logo included here! Conference sponsorships are still available by contacting Chris Shires, c-shires@msn.com, 515-707-1604



Upcoming Events

PUBLIC SPACE SCHOLAR RACHEL BERNEY TO SPEAK AT ISU COLLEGE OF DESIGN

Thursday, November, 10th, 2011

12:30pm - 1:30pm

Rachel Berney will highlight the efforts of two South American cities to reinvent themselves through public space in a presentation Thursday, Nov. 10, at Iowa State University. Berney will speak on "Visible Competency: Shaping Capital through Public Space in Latin America" at 12:30 p.m. in room 130, College of Design. The event is free and open to the public. Berney is an assistant professor of landscape architecture, urban design and planning in the School of Architecture at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, and interim director of the school's landscape architecture graduate program. Her research focuses on the use and politics of public space in urban regeneration projects.

Berney will present examples from Bogota, Colombia, and Buenos Aires, Argentina, and describe each city's attempt to use public space as a tool for building equity, reinventing

and defragmenting the city. Berney received a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from the University of Washington, Seattle, and a Master of Community Planning and doctorate in landscape architecture and environmental planning from the University of California, Berkeley. Her illustrations have appeared in a number of publications, including Randolph T. Hester's Design for Ecological Democracy (MIT Press, 2006), the Journal of Urban Design and the City of Seattle's Making Streets Work. Her article on creating citizen space in Bogota was published in Planning Theory in 2011. Berney's lecture is sponsored by the ISU Department of Community and Regional Planning. Contacts: Jane Rongerude, Community & Regional Planning, (515) 294-5289, jrong@iastate.edu Heather Sauer, Design Communications, (515) 204-9289, hsauer@iastate.edu.



ASK THE PLANNER

Question: "What is the status and outlook for Iowa's Smart Planning in light of the demise of the RIO office and its place in the current State Administration?"

Response: "These are dim (but not dark) times for Iowa Smart Planning due to the closure of the Rebuild Iowa Office and the lack of support from the current administration. However, this certainly was not unexpected and I'm hopeful that smart planning will not only survive in the current climate but will find ways to take root, grow support, and thrive in the future."

The biggest challenge right now, at least for the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force, comes from the absence of administrative and logistical support that the RIO staff provided to the Task Force. As a result, the Task Force is focusing on those recommendations contained in its November 2010 report to the Governor that can be accomplished without that support, such as through the Universities, volunteers, or grants. For instance, the Task Force has heard from many stakeholders that there is a need for "checklists" or "quick reference guides" on the smart planning principles that can be used by different audiences and applied to different situations. Examples might include a guide to be used by staff when developing smart plans; a checklist to be used by Planning Commissions and elected officials when reviewing development proposals; and a reference to be used in the review of annexation proposals.

I also think it is more important than ever for planners in the state to "tell the planning story" (to borrow a phrase from APA Board of Directors President Bruce Knight, FAICP) and to

frame the story in terms that resonate in the current political and economic climate. Ask yourself what sells better today: framing smart planning as promoting sustainability and good growth management; or framing smart planning as promoting efficiency in government and helping to create economic prosperity? All of it may be true, but not all of it may be perceived the same way. This was the advice of Jason Jordan, APA's Director of Public Policy, to the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force at its meeting on October 13 and it is the topic of the APAs current "Communications Boot Camp" series. If you are not aware of the boot camp, I encourage you to sign up (more information is available on the APA website, <http://www.planning.org/policy/communicationsbootcamp/>).

APA Iowa will be an important player in keeping smart planning alive in Iowa. The chapter should develop a unified message on the benefits of smart planning that resonates in the current political and economic climate; it can help to create the tools that can be of immediate benefit and use not only to planners but to our constituencies as well; and it can start to provide specific, local success stories of smart planning's positive impact on our communities, our economies, and our environments. Get involved and let the chapter leadership know that you are willing to help.

[Question submitted by William Burke, AICP. Answer provided by Les Beck, AICP. - Director Linn County Planning & Development; Co-Chair, Iowa Smart Planning Task Force]

MEET THE PLANNER - Katherine (KT) LaBadie



KT can be found on Linked In or contact her by email at klabadie@co.johnson.ia.us



Occupation:

Sustainability Assistant, Johnson County, IA

Background:

I'm an Ohio native who moved to New Mexico for 8 years after graduating college. In the fall of 2010 my husband and I relocated to Iowa City. I've worked previously as an environmental educator and as a local food planner, and I have a dual masters degree in Water Resources and Community and Regional Planning. I've been married to my husband Mark for over 5 years. We have two cats and many houseplants.

What planning tasks do you enjoy?

Public outreach and education, research and writing reports, conducting surveys or focus groups, and working on web based projects. While I prefer working on environmental or sustainability projects, I also enjoy the challenge of working on topics that I know less about.

What are some challenges you see in planning?

Currently, the lack of funds and political need to create resilient communities. But that's probably always been the case.

What do you like to do in your free time?

Canoe and hike with my husband, garden, cook, read, and volunteer.

What's the best vacation you've ever taken?

A two week trip to the Yucatan Peninsula where I scuba dived, swam with dolphins, played with a spider monkey, and traveled around the region to various ruins. Also, any of the month long camping trips I've taken with my husband touring the western US.

If you had a day and could do anything you wanted to do, what would it be?

Scuba dive alongside a whale shark.

If you could trade places with any other person for a week, whom would it be?

A fisherman on a beautiful south Pacific Island or a farmer in the valleys of Nepal.