

WINTER 2013-14

Notes From the Chair	1
Division Business	2
Planner Profile	3
<i>Michael Kolber</i>	
Project Gallery	4
<i>Planning for Food Systems in Lugo</i>	
Take Me There	7
<i>Spain</i>	
Window to the World	9

DIVISION LEADERSHIP

Laura Buhl
Chair

Beth S. Offenbacher
Past Chair

Andre A. Anderson, AICP
Secretary/Treasurer

Daniel J. Tirrell
Vice Chair Special Projects

Michael Kolber
Vice Chair Communications

Brian Kellogg
Social Media Coordinator

Miroo Desai, AICP
International Program Exchange Program

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Interplan Chief Editor
Ana Hernandez-Balzac

Cristina Delgado
Design Editor

Notes from the Chair

by **Laura Buhl** in Oregon

The International Division had a great time at the APA National Conference in Chicago this past April. We hosted the session "Model Development at Al Ain International Airport," which featured planners from the U.S. and Abu Dhabi who presented the new master plan for the mixed-use and transit-oriented redevelopment of Al Ain International Airport. The division also sponsored a session in the Public Space of the Americas Biennial series: Cultural Identity in Haiti's Public Squares. Be on the lookout for access to the recording of the session, which will be given to International Division members as part of the sponsorship agreement. Division members and friends enjoyed conversing and networking with planners from around the world at the division reception, hosted by the firm Solomon Cordwell Buenz at their offices on Michigan Ave., and at the division dinner.

Despite starting at 7 o'clock in the morning, our business meeting was very well attended. Division member Laura Baker received the Service to the Division Award for her exemplary work on the 2012 World Town Planning Day Online Conference, and Michael Kolber was confirmed as the division's new Vice Chair of Communications. We were happy to report that the division's finances are stable and that we are now able to re-launch some past initiatives and programs that had been on hiatus.

One of the programs that is beginning once again is the popular Student Grant Program. Our first round of applications was due in November and we will be announcing the grant recipients in January. Another is the Exchange Program. We have formed a committee that has been working with APA staff and planners from the U.K. and Australia to come up with a new protocol for exchanges that fully takes advantage of Internet technology. I encourage you to read Miroo Desai's article in this issue to get an idea of what the program was like in the past. We expect to have more news about the program's relaunch at the APA National Conference in Atlanta.

The division has also had another successful production of the World Town Planning Day Online Conference, which focused on water issues this year. We had presenters from Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, and Oceania, who addressed a wide range of water issues that create challenges for planners. We would like to thank division members Arun Jain, Andre Anderson, and Michael Kolber for running a new type of session for the conference: the Moderators' Forum. They provided stimulating conversation and food for thought about global warming (rising sea levels), and international planning and development related to water issues. The division ran a LinkedIn discussion challenge to distribute free registrations to members. A number of stimulating conversations were initiated on our LinkedIn group page. Join the groups if you have not done so yet and join in on the conversations: <<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4628281>>.

We wish you all the best in your work and travels. Please get in touch if you have ideas or would like to get involved with the division.

Warmest regards,

Laura Buhl

Laura Buhl is a Land Use and Transportation Planner with the State of Oregon's Transportation & Growth Management Program.

Connect with Us

The International Division is happy to announce its presence on the most popular social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. We invite you to connect, contribute, and comment!

Welcome

Cristina Delgado has volunteered to help with the layout and graphics of Interplan, the Division's biannual newsletter. Thank you, Cristina; we are happy to have you as part of our team!

Seeking Nominees for Division Elections

Have you ever had ideas about what the International Division could do better or differently? Have you wanted to get involved in ongoing initiatives and create new initiatives? If so, please consider running for a division leadership position. We are now soliciting nominations for:

- Chair
- Vice chair at-large
- Vice chair of special projects
- Vice chair of communications
- Secretary/Treasurer

Please go to our website (<http://www.planning.org/divisions/international/>) or email Daniel Tirrell (daniel.tirrell@gmail.com), chair of the Nominations Committee, for more information.

➤ PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT | Exchange Program

By Miroo Desai

Editor's Note: The International Division has just created a committee to explore how to restart the Division's Exchange Program. Hoping to generate interest in this effort, we asked division member Miroo Desai to share her experience in the program when it was first offered. For updates on the progress of the program, stay tuned to the Division's social media and newsletters.

I first heard about the International Division's Exchange Program through a friend and former colleague who had read about the program on the APA website. I decided to register to participate in the program because I have always been interested in how planning works in other countries. I have lived in China, India, and Jamaica; and in graduate school, I took a number of classes on planning issues in developing countries.

To arrange the exchange, I emailed the contact person at the time, Matt Flynn, telling him that I was interested in the Program. He promptly he emailed me a form that requested information on my professional experience, and the place where I worked and lived. With that information, he was able to match me up with Carolyn, a public sector planner working in the long range department of the City of Scarborough, England. Carolyn and I then emailed each other and figured out the logistics.

We agreed to spend two weeks at each other's places, and I was able to get administrative leave for two weeks so that I wouldn't have to use my vacation time. In exchange, I would report my experience to my Planning Commission, showing pictures of interest. I paid for all my expenses, which included \$900 for my flight to London; \$200 for a train from London to Scarborough; and \$250 for meals and other expenses.

I consider this exchange to be one of my better experiences in life. During the two weeks I was able to shadow Carolyn, I had the opportunity to read their planning documents; go on a site visit with one of her colleagues; and attend their Council meeting. After work, I spent a number of evenings with her colleagues at the pub; and during the weekends, she took me sightseeing to nearby places of interest as I had done when she came to visit me in the Bay area. We got along very well together and we would have discussions into the night on just about everything. After all, our profession pretty much links all things together!

I learned that the planning profession in the UK works in a fairly similar manner to the way it works in the US. The issues planners face in both places are similar, and so are people's complaints and concerns. A major difference is that planning in the US is more decentralized and in California it is a lot more participatory than what I saw in the UK. Finally, I learned that if I ever wanted to work and live in the UK then I would be able to do so in a very short adjustment period.

Miroo Desai, AICP participated in the International Division's Exchange Program in 2006 while working as Senior Planner with the City of Emeryville in the San Francisco Bay area, a position she still holds today. Miroo currently serves on the Board of the California Chapter of APA as the Membership Inclusion Director, and on the Board of the Northern California Section of the California Chapter of APA as Diversity Director.



▾ PLANNER PROFILE | Michael Kolber

Michael Kolber at a meeting for the Tuungane project, in which they were explaining the rules for the election of a Village Development Committee to one of the communities.

Michael Kolber is the International Division's new Vice-Chair for Communications. He has extensive experience in community planning, monitoring and evaluation, and international development.

Michael works for United Way of Greater Union County as Program Manager for Community Building, focusing on planning for local social services. He contributed to the Union County Needs Assessment, developed a new database for the tracking of clients at partner agencies, and works with partner agencies to ensure the quality of services that are provided to clients.

Michael's prior position was as Monitoring Specialist for International Rescue Committee in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He worked on the Tuungane Project, the largest community-driven reconstruction project in history, which is being implemented in 1,800 communities throughout eastern Congo. Michael spent his days there staring at spreadsheets, designing spreadsheets, training people to use spreadsheets, and meditating on the existential question of spreadsheets. He worked with the construction team to develop a system to monitor and track construction quality, and with the Columbia University evaluation team to develop systems for data collection.

Michael served two years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Burkina Faso. He worked with a regional credit union and reached out to local women's groups. He co-founded the Peace Corps Artisans Fund and worked on the campaign for the eradication of Guinea Worm.

Michael has an M.S. in Urban Planning from Columbia University and a B.A. in Economics from Drew University. He served as a Planning Fellow with the Manhattan Borough President's Office. His travels with school took him to Israel, Egypt, British Columbia, Argentina, and the halls of the UN.

As Vice Chair of Communications, Michael would like to ensure that the division provides information, resources, and a forum for planners to solve the special problems that arise from working outside of the States. Michael can be reached at makolber@gmail.com.

Planning for Food Systems in Lugo, Spain

By Alfonso Morales, Andres Manuel García, Wim Timmermans, Rafael Crecente, and Ad Woudstra

Recently, a group of scholars and students from universities in the Netherlands, Spain, and the United States were convened in the city of Lugo, Spain to explore how local governments can use scenario planning to address the future challenges of their local and regional food system. The effort was part of the larger F:ACTS! Initiative (Forms for: Adapting to Climate Change through Territorial Strategies!), a partnership of fourteen authorities and agencies from eight countries across Europe that seeks to enhance resilience through the exchange of ideas and practices, case studies, expert coaching, and internships. (Please visit www.factsproject.eu for more information) The effort consisted of a week of lectures, field experiences, scenario development, and public presentations aimed at influencing the City of Lugo to create a local food system that protects green space in the city, fosters food production activities in urban and nearby rural areas, and fosters self-sufficiency and the commercialization of local products. What follows is a report on the week's activities and lessons.

THE TEAM AND THEIR TALENTS

Rafael Crecente, Director of the Master in Sustainable Land Planning program at the University of Santiago de Compostela, and professor Wim Timmermans of Van Hall Larenstein University built on previous collaborations to address food systems planning in Lugo. They recruited Alfonso Morales, an expert in urban agriculture and community food systems from the University of Wisconsin, Madison; Ruth Fleuren and Jos Uljin, experts in landscape architecture from Van Hall Larenstein University; and Ad Woudstra, an expert in public participation and scenario planning, also from Van Hall Larenstein University. A total of twenty-six students attended the study trip.

THE LEARNING PROCESS

Day 1

The week began with introductory lectures by Andrés Manuel García, researcher at the Land Laboratory of the University of Santiago de Compostela, on the administrative organization of Spain, the food and food systems activities

of Lugo. Morales delivered six lectures on community/regional food systems. Ad Woudstra provided lectures on rapid rural appraisal, scenario planning, and the creation of "mindscapes," a process to produce a graphical representation of how users understand the particular qualities of an area. Following the lectures, the students were briefed in interview and observational techniques.

Day 2

On Tuesday morning, the group visited Lugo's public market and attended two more lectures by Morales. In the evening, the students learned how to use mindscapes as part of Rapid Rural Appraisal and scenario planning processes. Woudstra explained how this multi-method approach can be used to develop knowledge and insights associated with the problems and possibilities of a region. The approach's advantages are that it (1) addresses clients' needs, (2) can be executed by multi-disciplinary teams that constantly exchange information, (3) produces results quickly and inexpensively, and (4) delivers reliable data. Providing the community visual and graphical representations of findings makes communication less dependent on written language, enhancing community participation and the comparative exploration of participants' experiences and perceptions. Fleuren and Uljin demonstrated Woudstra's point with a graphic that showed the students' concepts and experiences, or their local "mindscapes."

Day 3

On Wednesday, the group toured the O Rato nature preserve and vegetable gardens. Here, students interviewed representatives of the Federation of Neighborhood Associations, an organization that represents about 120 associations, and the O Bandullo environmental organization, which is a member organization of the Galician Association of Urban Gardeners. Students also interviewed the neighborhood association's extension agents, who are employed to support gardeners, and an elected official of the Provincial Council, who is in charge of environmental concerns and renewable energies. The group also visited the O Carmen quarter to view a part of the central city where urban agriculture might be possible.

Next was a trip to the municipal building, followed by interviews with Alberto Rodriguez, an architect and urban planner who is a representative of the Association of Ecological Development of Galicia, a contributor to the food systems efforts. Finally, the group travelled a short distance from the city to visit the Vida de Aldea, a comprehensive dairy/farm/social service operation with rental gardens available to families.

On Wednesday night, Woudstra led the students through the process of conceptualizing key scenario drivers and formulating the scenario drivers. The process involved a debate and discussion that is typical of the scenario planning process and was central to both pedagogical and project goals. From it emerged graphically rich narratives driven by two key predictions: whether the economic crises will deepen or diminish and whether the awareness for local food will grow or not. Four scenarios were constructed:

Day 4

On Thursday, students worked on the scenarios in four multi-disciplinary groups. Some group members created a schematic analysis of Lugo and its surroundings (topography, water, built environment, green spaces), while other students worked on the scenario narratives, paying attention to social and spatial developments. The stories were presented with text and graphics and critiqued by teachers and group members.

Day 5

On Friday morning, students presented their preliminary scenario plans to the assembled faculty. A spirited exchange ensued, scenarios were clarified, and in the afternoon students improved upon the scenario plan for Lugo and created more detailed scenario-driven plans for the O Carmen Quarter in preparation for the public presentation.

Day 6

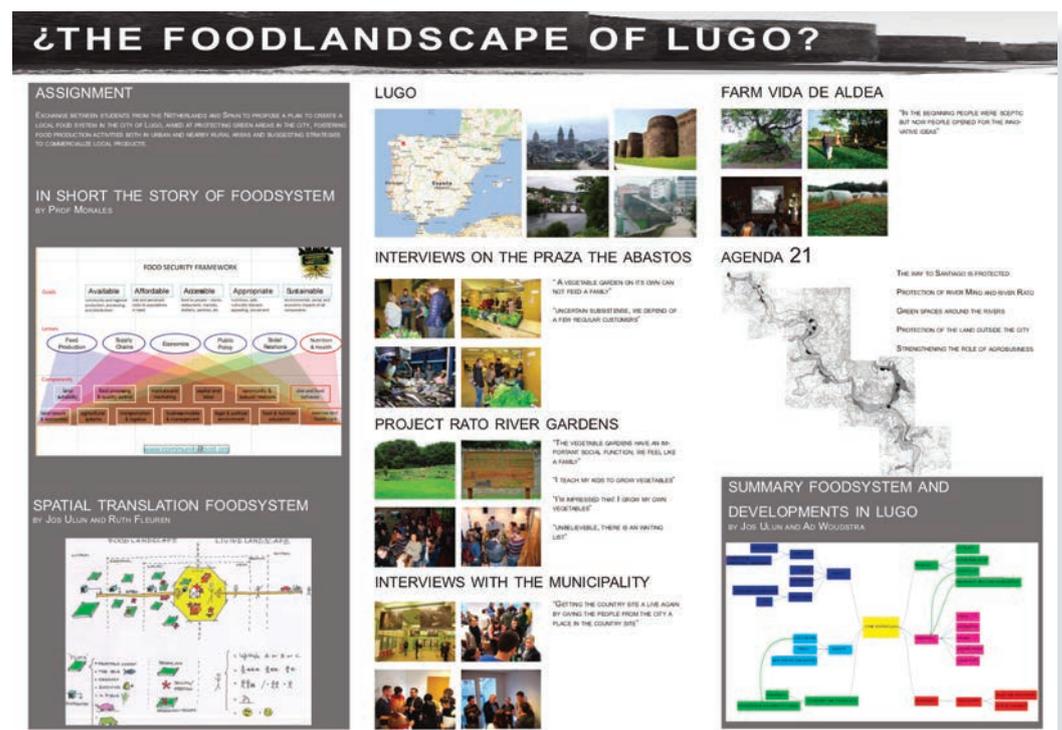
On Saturday morning, each group publicly presented its scenario, printed on A1-sized posters, complete with details of the O Carmen area and another area in which the effects of the scenario could be best demonstrated. Following the presentation, those gathered discussed the scenarios and the Spanish students and scholars organized themselves for follow-up presentations in the region.

SCENARIOS

	Deepening economic crisis	Diminishing economic crisis
Diminishing awareness for local food	Disaster, Disaster	Large Scale Lugo
Growing awareness for local food	Crisis Asks for Creativity	Green Paradise

One example of the posters developed by students who participated in this exercise.

To see the posters, go to: <http://laborate.usc.es/en/news/2012-10-31/conclusions-international-seminar-local-food-systems.html>





CONCLUSION

The global food system has expanded to the point that most food consumed in the industrialized world travels about 1,500 miles from producer to consumer. In Lugo, Spain, a city of about 100,000 residents, the changes behind this development occurred in the mid-twentieth century, much later than in other industrialized countries.

However, typical trends accompanied the broad development, migration from rural to urban, and the intensification of the remaining farms for competition in a globalized food market. The remaining farmers suffer from increased input prices and decreased profit from their products. Today, most employment is in the public sector, services, or the food processing industry. The lifestyles associated with industrial employment and industrialized agriculture have changed consumer habits in Lugo, as they have around the world; the sale of locally produced food has decreased, and more households cook from prepackaged or convenience food offered by large supermarkets at low price.

Nevertheless, the city maintains some of the traditional agriculture that once supported a robust local food system. Further, the region celebrates cultural food practices and some foods from the region enjoy a following. Still, while master plans restrict urban agriculture,

many residents of Lugo still maintain vegetable gardens within the city. Additionally, the city population retains strong familial connections to rural areas with easy access to local products from friends and relatives.

In spite of declining traditional agriculture, initiatives to revitalize the local food system are reemerging, encouraged by existing traditional practices and by new organizations embracing sustainable food systems. The importance of these social and economic drivers and the uncertainty of the future make Lugo a perfect location for using scenario planning to explore the future of the region's food system.

Scenario planning is an important opportunity for planners seeking to capacitate communities to address the food system and other challenges to society. This jointly organized effort shows the possibility for the international transfer of food system knowledge and further the application of scenario planning to food systems problems. Students learned public participation and various skills, and offered a non-threatening and new vision to civil society and government who might otherwise be leery of "expert" advice or consultants with a particular political view or position in local conflicts.

Though Spain, the Netherlands, and the U.S. bear different political subdivisions and land use practices, they share recognizably similar food supply chains, food production practices, and planning methods. In all three countries we find urban gardens, neighborhood associations, and environmental organizations populating the public/private landscape with broadly similar concerns for production, distribution and marketing, and other local/regional food activities.

Likewise, scenario planning is common on both continents. These broad commonalities, further honed by a series of lectures on the food system, facilitated the scenario planning process and made the results understandable in Lugo and its surrounding region. Our contemporary global food system demands globally applied planning techniques and this example capacitates others in meeting this emerging professional responsibility.

Top: Thirty Dutch and Spanish students spent a week learning about the Food System in Lugo. The students pictured are visiting a local fruit and vegetable stand.



TAKE ME THERE | Becoming a Planner in Spain

By Helen Ramírez

Top: Boadilla del Monte, a small city located approximately 20 miles west of Madrid's central business district, is where Helen comes home to everyday. With integrated light rail, greenbelts, and protected state and national parks within its city limits, Boadilla del Monte is tailored for pedestrians.

Right: Helen Ramirez, enjoying coffee during a break from work in Madrid, Spain.



Helen lives in Madrid with her husband and two children. She can be reached at hrramirez@yahoo.com

For the past 8 years, I have been working as a planner for a large Spanish architecture, engineering, and planning firm based in Madrid, Spain. What led me to working internationally and how was I able to do it, you ask?

My journey to living and working abroad begins 24 years ago when I decided to forego the traditional Catholic 15th birthday celebration that most first-generation Mexican-American girls have. Instead I took a 14-day TWA trip to Europe, a trip that was unexpectedly life-changing as I sensed that I would someday return to live in Europe.

Fast forward to 1995. After an intense 3rd year of community lab and design courses in the City and Regional Planning program at California Polytechnic San Luis Obispo (SLO), I decided that it was the right time to go abroad again. My decision, however, was not generally understood or accepted by my peers. It was a time when less than 1% of the student population in the California State University system studied abroad and graduating and making money was the priority.

Thanks to my parents and open-minded faculty in the Planning and Foreign Language departments, I was able to do my 4th year of college at the Complutense University of Madrid, one of the oldest public universities in the world and the top university in Spain. I was not only able to meet international program students

8 from all over the US, but also take courses with Spanish 4th year geography students. I came to feel at home in this wonderful country and never imagined meeting my Spanish husband, who would eventually “convince” me to move to Madrid in 2004.

But by 2004, I was at a very different stage in life. I had worked for the Los Angeles County Community Development Commission and for various cities in Southern California as a senior planner. I enjoyed my career; and that, surprisingly, made moving to Europe a difficult decision. Working abroad is nothing like studying abroad (“no tiene nada que ver”). One of my concerns was whether, even with a legal work permit, I would be able to find a job as a planner. Therefore, our decision to move to Spain came with the caveat that if I could not find a job we would move back to the US. Another concern I had was that I would have to obtain a certification of my educational credentials in order to work in Spain as a certified architect or planner (having a six year architecture degree from a university in Spain, which includes a specialization in planning, is equivalent to having both a bachelors and a masters degree from a university in the US). This can be a long bureaucratic process that can take five to ten years.

As in any job search, being at the right place at the right time was key. I moved at a time of strong economic growth where many small cities in Spain with large surplus budgets due to a boom in building permits and development impact fees kept planners busy revitalizing their historic downtowns, updating their Comprehensive General Plans and creating new growth sectors. Having networked with engineering and planning firms through my husband’s colleagues prior to moving paid off: I was hired within 3 months, which is quick by Spanish standards.

Once on the job, I was expected to speak and write fluently, and to quickly become an expert in Spanish federal and regional planning, housing, and environmental laws. I also discovered that the famous Spanish siesta is a myth! Many Spaniards live too far from work to actually make it home by public transit to eat, nap, and get back to the office by 4pm. We typically take a one-hour lunch, eat in small, designated eating areas, have a quick espresso, and try making it home by 7:30pm, to watch soccer perhaps.

Fortunately, even though it was a stressful time,



my learning curve was short and I have been able to work as project manager on exciting and controversial projects such as the Recoletos-Prado Corridor Project, the revitalization of one of the most important historic corridors in Madrid. Unfortunately, as the world now knows, Spain grew too quickly. Close to one million newly-built homes lie empty, and what were once pristine Spanish coastlines have been hit hard with development. This economic crisis has forced many Spanish companies to venture abroad in search of business opportunities. As a result, I have shifted to a position as International Commercial Business Development Manager. This has allowed me to work on projects in as far as Mexico and India, and I am currently working on the revitalization of neighborhoods hit by flooding in Mozambique.

I do not know where life will take me next, but I have learned that the risks I have taken thus far have been the right ones. I would encourage other planners to travel, explore, and meet people from different continents, with other social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Do not wait until retirement to do it!

Top: A poster showcasing one of Helen's recent projects, the Recoletos Prado Redevelopment Corridor.



↘ WINDOW TO THE WORLD

Photo by, Ana Hernandez-Balzac.

Cargo ship workers wait for business to pick up in Grenada's once lively Inner Harbor. Hard-hit by Hurricanes Ivan and Emily in 2004 and 2005, respectively, this Caribbean island's economy was still devastated when this picture was taken in 2008. Technical assistance from the World Bank and other international organizations helped strengthen the management capacities of several of the island's commercial institutions and resulted in more efficient customs services for domestic and international trade (See <http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2013/04/23/Grenada-investment-promotion-support-exporters-fiscal-governance>). Unfortunately, the recovery process has created great national debt for Grenada, and the global economic downturn of recent years has not significantly improved conditions (<http://www.gov.gd/economy.html>).