



UCIrvine
PLANNING STUDENT ORGANIZATION

2008 OUTSTANDING PSO AWARDS

Community Outreach

**This application is being submitted
on behalf of the Planning Student
Organization at the University
of California, Irvine (UCI-PSO).
The organization is led by twelve
dedicated members and represents
all Master of Urban and Regional
Planning students at UC Irvine.**



Josh Carrillo

President

Matthew Gelbman

Vice President

Christy Diecker

Secretary

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Communications Chair

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Alumni Chair

Leah Boyer

Philanthropy Chair

Blair Schaeffer

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Josh Carrillo*

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**Mr. Carrillo will be out of the country until April 1, 2009.*

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2008 ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

01.26	Community Outreach: Upper Newport Bay Wetlands Restoration
04.07	Office Visit: BonTerra Consulting
04.16	Professional Development: Resume Workshop
04.27 - 05.01	National Planning Conference - Las Vegas
05.16	Brown Bag Lunch: Chris Carillo, Senator Feinstein's Office
09.21 - 09.24	California Chapter Conference - Hollywood
09.27	Community Outreach: Santa Ana Community Center
10.01	Professional Development: Mentorship program
10.16	PDAOC Planning Officials Forum
10.17	Office Visit: City of Costa Mesa
10.18	Community Outreach: Santa Ana Neighborhood Pride Day
10.21	Best Practices: Adopted Charter
10.28	Community Outreach: Upper Newport Bay Wetlands Restoration
11.07	Office Visit: RBF Consulting
11.01 - 11.30	Community Outreach: Thanksgiving Food Drive
12.01 - 12.31	Community Outreach: Adopt-a-Family holiday Charity

Community Outreach

Our goal for all UCI-PSO community outreach events has been to provide consistent support to existing organizations that strive to make a difference in communities. We focus our efforts on partnering with existing organizations because students have limited time and competing priorities that can make it difficult to sustain long-term volunteer efforts. Nonetheless, community outreach is an integral part of UCI-PSO.

The Upper Newport Bay restoration and the Neighborhood Pride Day in Santa Ana are two activities in which UCI-PSO organized the opportunity to make improvements in our physical and natural environments and to learn about issues related to planning. These two events demonstrate our commitment to community outreach and our goal of partnership.

We are especially proud of our contributions to both of these efforts.

Upper Newport Bay Restoration



UCI-PSO has organized reoccurring opportunities for students to volunteer their time and hard work toward a local community-based initiative to restore the native wetlands of Upper Newport Bay in Orange County. Students were given a brief education about the impact of invasive species and then worked to identify and eradicate non-native plants, and to plant seedlings of native species. The continued involvement of MURP students in this restoration process will contribute to the overall improvement of the environmental quality of the bay.

These events ("ROOTS days") are operated jointly between the Orange County Parks Department and the California Coastal Commission. This activity brings students together with governmental organizations and community members of all ages to participate in a long-term restoration of a critical wetland environment. The Upper Newport Bay is an important estuary in central Orange County. It provides natural filtration of pollutants to water running into the ocean, and a place for bikers, walkers, and families to enjoy the outdoors. Ongoing volunteer efforts have helped implement a multi-jurisdictional effort to restore the condition of coastal wetlands of Upper Newport Bay.

Neighborhood Pride Day



UCI-PSO volunteers participated in the third annual Santa Ana Neighborhood Pride Day in Santa Ana along with other community teams and local residents. Students worked to paint select houses, remove trash and old furniture, and replant yards with sod and flowers. These improvements make a tremendous difference in the neighborhood and help to restore the neighborhood's pride.

The non-profit organization Neighborhood Housing Services of Orange County selects a block of Santa Ana to "make over." The activities of the Santa Ana Neighborhood Pride Day represent small changes in these communities that help to improve the overall character and quality of these neighborhoods.



UCI IRVINE

PLANNING STUDENT ORGANIZATION



Class of 2009



Class of 2010



Planning, Policy, and Design

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December 16, 2008

Susan Turner
Leadership Coordinator
American Planning Association
122 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Ms. Turner:

It is a pleasure and privilege to provide this letter of support on behalf of the UC-Irvine PSO chapter's application for APA's Outstanding PSO Award. As Chair of the Department of Planning, Policy, and Design I am intimately familiar with the efforts of the eleven-member governing council of the PSO, and their multiple community and professional service activities. While you will doubtless receive many applications from highly-effective PSOs for this award, I believe that the Irvine PSO is especially worthy of the Outstanding PSO Award for three reasons.

First, the UCI PSO group has engaged in a broad range of community service activities – from volunteering with children, to wetlands restoration and local food drives, to mention but a few – that not only encompass a large number of needy constituencies but also positively affect a great many groups that span a considerable geographic region. In short, these activities embrace the entire length and breadth of Orange County; the third largest county in population in California, and one of the most culturally and economically-diverse. As reflected by the breadth of our PSO's activities, their efforts span environmental, social service, and anti-poverty needs.

Second, these service activities have been soundly thought through and strategically approached in ways that makes them replicable for future PSO groups to pursue in years to come. The PSO leadership has been careful to select activities that can make best use of students' limited time by stressing high-priority needs that can be satisfied through partnership with other high-profile community entities including consulting firms and local government agencies. Through effectively focusing on a few select activities, a precedent has been established for efficiently using PSO student-members' time and resources, also ensuring that the learning curve for future collaboration with such community groups can be considerably shortened.

Third, the Irvine PSO has not merely pursued a set of highly-worthwhile activities that serve a large number of under-served groups, under-represented causes, and urgent needs – but they

have created the capacity for future success and organizational effectiveness by stressing activities that will contribute to the development of organizational leadership. Exemplary of this capacity building (and this is no mean feat: as Department chair I know the difficulty in accomplishing the following effort) the Irvine PSO has drafted and adopted a charter which established the unit as a recognized student organization on the UC campus – entitling it to receive campus funds to support its service-related activities, and providing a framework for internal decision-making which will, in the future, make it easier for the organization to respond – in a timely and consensus-animated manner – to new opportunities and projects.

In conclusion, I have been teaching at the university level for 25 years; have worked with graduate student organizations and honor societies of various sizes, complements, and missions; and, have become familiar with a variety of community-service and educational activities embraced by such groups. Never have I seen a group of graduate students as singularly and sharply devoted to excellence as the UC-Irvine PSO chapter. The breadth, quality, and effectiveness of its activities – coupled with the dedication of its leadership – make this effort most worthy of national recognition.

Sincerely,

David L. Feldman
Professor and Chair



American Planning Association
California Chapter
Orange

Making Great Communities Happen

PO Box 75463
San Clemente, CA 92673-0183

December 16, 2008

American Planning Association Awards Jury

**SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA IRVINE SUBMITTAL FOR
OUTSTANDING PLANNING STUDENT ORGANIZATION
AWARD**

Dear Members of the Jury,

I am pleased to submit this letter of support for the consideration of the UC Irvine Planning Student Organization for a 2008 Outstanding PSO Award. As the 2008/2009 APA California Orange Section Director, I have had the pleasure of working directly with several PSO students this past year. Although, the Orange Section has always had a strong relationship with the faculty and students in University of California Irvine's Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program, I believe that UC Irvine Planning Student Organization's efforts in 2008 were exceptional.

During 2008, three students volunteered as Student Representatives to the Orange Section Board, and two of the students took on additional responsibilities to serve as Co-Vice Directors of Public Information. Under their leadership and creativity, they developed an electronic format for the Orange Section's quarterly newsletter, **The Orange County Planner**. The new e-mail friendly format has been well-received by the over 600-member Orange Section, and the electronic format is not only "green", but economical in relaying important Section information to the membership and students.

The UC Irvine PSO also organized several visits to professional planning offices in 2008. The field trips included both public and private sector offices, including the City of Costa Mesa where I am the Assistant Development Services Director. These "out of the classroom experiences" are important in that they give students a glimpse of how their studies translate into the planning profession's day-to-day operations. With the encouragement of the UCI-PSO, many students also attended **The Planning Officials Forum** that is held annually by the Planning Directors Association of Orange County in conjunction with the Orange Section of California APA. "Growing up, Growing Green" was the theme of this day-long forum that offered nine sessions on sustainable development. The students were able to learn of practices currently being used by planners from throughout the State.

In conclusion, the UCIrvine Planning Student Organization has done an outstanding job of providing its members a well-rounded agenda of extracurricular activities that complement their classroom activities and is deserving of national recognition by APA as an Outstanding Planning Student Organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Kimberly Brandt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'K'.

Kimberly A. Brandt, AICP
Section Director, 2008-2010
Orange Section
The California Chapter of APA