Division name: International Division

Division contact person and contact information: Michael Kolber, Vice Chair at Large, makolber@gmail.com (cc Tim Van Epp, Chair, tvanepp@gmail.com)

Award Category: Education Excellence

Name of the Division project, program or process being nominated: Student Travel Grants

Description of the project, program or process, including the targeted audience:
The International Division’s student grant program had another successful year. We are incredibly proud of the research that was conducted and believe that our program has an enormous benefit for both the students and for the wider planning community.

All research conducted as part of the program is done exclusively for the Division; students are not allowed to submit theses, studio products, or other student papers as part of their application to the Division. Given this, the Division makes every effort to accommodate the schedules of the students as they complete their work. For this reason, the grant program does not line up with APA’s fiscal year. Our priority is creating a strong learning experience and producing high-level research.

During this fiscal year, our two 2016 student grant recipients completed their final papers. Jackie Bucheck studied economic development and biodiversity degradation in post-conflict Cambodia. Her research highlighted the role that economic growth, foreign aid, and local government corruption each play in habitat destruction. She also made strong recommendations for how expatriate workers need to operate in order to achieve positive results. Our second recipient, Unai Miguel Andres compared how ideas of biophilic cities are applied in Eastern and Western contexts. He used his student grant to travel to Seoul, Korea and used Vitoria, Spain as a comparison.

As of the end of the fiscal year, one of the two 2017 student grant awardees had completed his travels while the other was still completing her research. Evan Todz researched the publicness of parks in Medellín, Columbia, as a mechanism for social justice. He used Varna’s Star Model as an assessment tool, making adjustments to the model to fit the local context. Amanda Bryant compared models of suburbanization in Amsterdam, Paris, and Vienna, analyzing factors that make suburban neighborhoods successful. As an American student studying for her Masters in the Netherlands, she used her travel grant for trips to Paris and Vienna; the Dutch school year meant that her travels were not completed until October of 2017. Both students completed their final papers by the end of the 2017 calendar year.

HOW OUR STUDENT GRANT PROGRAM MEETS THE CRITERIA FOR THIS AWARD CATEGORY
Outstanding scholastic and educational content of the effort:
Our student grant program requires the recipient to write for the audience of professional planners that make up our Division membership. There is an emphasis on identifying tools and best practices that our members can incorporate into their own work. Travel allows our students to become their own primary sources, and we encourage our recipients to include their personal observations and opinions into the reports.

After being selected but before travel, students are required to sign conditions of acceptance and submit a research proposal to the Division. Vice-Chair At-Large, Michael Kolber, often asks questions and requests additional information before approving the research proposals. Mr. Kolber also works with the students upon their return to work through issues in drafting reports, with phone conferences, email correspondence, and, in previous years when it was geographically possible, in-person meetings. Student recipients are given detailed feedback after submitting each draft, with each student submitting three to four drafts before their papers are completed. Abstracts from each report are reviewed one additional time by our newsletter editors before being published as articles in the Division newsletter, InterPlan.

**Measurable impact in reaching target audience — number of members or professionals: reached through educational effort:**
Two students are selected for the travel grant each year. Abstracts for the research are sent to the full International Division membership list, while the full research is available for public consumption on the Division website. The research can be viewed at [https://www.planning.org/divisions/international/grants.htm](https://www.planning.org/divisions/international/grants.htm)

**Originality of educational effort:**
The Division is unaware of a similar student research travel grant program among the other APA divisions.

**Topical relevancy of educational effort:**
Applications for the student grant program are scored in part based on topical relevancy to the profession. During the writing process, students are required to provide some sort of guidance that professional planners can take from the research. Jackie Bucheck provided recommendations for how planners working on foreign aid projects should interact with local staff in order to identify problems in governance. Unai Miguel Andres introduced planners to the idea of biophilic cities and the use of connectedness to nature scale to help identify how communities are meeting the needs of residents. Evan Todz demonstrated how planners can utilize Verna’s Star Model to evaluate the publicness of parks. Amanda Bryant showed how suburban neighborhoods need to incorporate green space, social interaction and personalization, accessibility and orientation, and mixed use and mixed housing as a unified plan in order to be successful.