Division Chair’s Report: NPC17 Wrap-up Edition
Tracey S. Corbitt, AICP

The 2017 National Planning Conference in NYC is over and was a resounding success for a national division on the rise and declaring its relevance as a leader in our communities and the national APA organization. Since its incorporation, perseverance and hard work over the past 25 years have raised the APA LGBTQ and Planning Division to be a formidable presence for both mainstream and LGBTQ-relevant issues important to the planning community. In NYC this spring, we demonstrated our importance as a collective force.

We are proud of defending our accomplishments as a community, willing to show our resolve to advocate for the important issues facing our LGBTQ brothers and sisters in communities throughout North America and the world. We have grown our membership to serve our needs, causes, and advocacy, demonstrating that even as we have gained important equal rights in society we are ready to lead, build, grow, and continue to be valuable contributors to our communities and the most disadvantaged by promoting equality, leadership, and compassion to others joined in our on-going struggle for inclusion and acceptance.

With the resources available, we hosted members from all across the continent (and the world) who have committed to our continuing mission to raise awareness about planning issues that affect the economic viability of our communities: social services, public health, homelessness, education, leadership development, immigration sanctuary, foreign human rights, and overall inclusion—at a time when we are under attack domestically and abroad. Our voices could not be considered more important than they are now.

As our domestic marriage equality victory resounded with bittersweet success, we were reminded weeks before the conference of our duty to defend the national historic designation of the Stonewall Inn (and others to come), the internal struggles of our community with the divisions of racial discrimination, the immigration bans on our asylum-seeking brothers and sisters from countries abroad (Chechnya, the Sudan and elsewhere in Africa, certain Muslim countries, etc.), and the jeopardization of immigration rights for binational couples under the Green Card scrutinization of the current White House administration.

There is work to be done.

Thank you to all of the Division volunteers, from near and far, who made the time and effort to celebrate the years of hard work (a quarter century within the APA) to make our voices heard, and who participated in our sessions—speaking, organizing, facilitating, celebrating. To our award winners, all across the board: we are so proud of what you do! And to our planners from outside of the APA—those who came out and want to join us, but don’t have the resources, but have the voice—we welcome you.

If there was ever a time in the national consciousness for participation in a movement for betterment of the status quo, NYC NPC17 showed our Division’s leadership that NOW is the time. Our membership is at an all-time high… whether policy, community activism, social activities, pure planning relevant topics, CM credits, mentorship, leadership and career development, networking with our planners nationally, or purely safe-haven within your organization—whether “out” or not—please join us, we have a place for you here. Send a text, email, or give us a call.

The Division is yours to own and explore!
2018-2020 Division Executive Committee Election

This year marks the second election for the APA’s LGBTQ and Planning Division as part of the national consolidated election process. After a call for nominees at the Annual General Meeting of the National Planning Conference in New York City, position statements were garnered for the three Executive Committee elected positions for the 2018-2020 term: Division Chair, Division Vice-Chair (primary), and Secretary-Treasurer. Election winners shall assume their positions for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2018.

Position statements and photographs of the incumbents and candidates are included here, and please note that voting is taking place by secret e-ballot sent directly to the APA-specific email address that Division members use as point-of-contact for official business through September 7, 2017. Please check your inbox for the important voting email and password, or the follow-up if it happens to hit your junk/spam mail folder!

A special thank-you to our Division Elections Committee Chair, Jeff Davis, AICP, of Horsley Witten Group, Inc. from Providence, Rhode Island, who has steadfastly and reliably supervised the LGBTQ and Planning Division’s biennial elections for the past decade. Many thanks to Jeff for his time and commitment to our Division and the APA organization.

Chair – Tracey Corbitt, AICP

Tracey Corbitt, AICP, is a professional planner with over 28 years’ experience in municipal, regional and environmental planning. Her specialties and skills include land use, comprehensive planning, site planning, zoning, grant management, watershed and natural resources management, GIS and 3D visualization.

Ms. Corbitt has served on the LGBTQ and Planning Division Executive Committee for 4 years and is a member of the APA Diversity Committee. She has also served as the NY Metro Chapter APA Lower Hudson East Section Director. Ms. Corbitt has a Bachelors in Landscape Architecture from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Position Statement

I am proud of the work that the current Executive Committee has done to:

• Promote inclusivity through our name change to LGBTQ and Planning
• Provide excellent professional development and networking opportunities at the National Conferences
• Secure a $45,000 Planners4Health Grant to ensure diversity is considered in the Plan4Health initiative.

Going forward, I think it will be essential to expand the Executive Committee so we can be more effective with increasing sponsorship and membership. This will bring opportunities to developing and supporting existing and new professional development and networking opportunities.

It is essential that we inspire our young members to stay involved while also engaging our founding members so we remember our past. It will also be important for the Division to always be a part of the conversation about APA and leadership for the future. The LGBTQ community has come a long way for equal rights and acknowledgement. We don’t want progress to slip through our fingers.

Thank you for participating in the elections and I hope you give me the privilege of continuing my service with the APA’s LGBTQ and Planning Division.
I am completing my first term as Vice Chair of the LGBTQ and Planning Division. I am very interested in continuing the exchange of ideas and information important to our community and friends of our community. While our national and global community has experienced enormous growth and success in recent years, it is vital to continue the dialogue of growth and acceptance.

In my professional practice as a city planner and landscape architect, I focus on creating integrated approaches and solutions to complex planning issues, particularly at city, watershed, and regional scales. My project portfolio includes climate adaptation and resilience planning, climate vulnerability assessment, master plan development, site opportunity and constraints analysis, water resources planning studies, and watershed management plans.

I am honored to be nominated to run for Secretary/Treasurer of the LGBTQ and Planning Division for a second term. I have been a member of APA since 2013 and of the LGBTQ Division since 2014.

It is an exciting time to be a planner in the LGBTQ and Planning Division! As our communities experience upheaval from the economic and political forces around us, we need solidarity now more than ever. Our local and national conference events help to create an engaged community of LGBTQ people who bring together diverse backgrounds and talents. The LGBTQ and Planning Division is a critical platform for us to stand up and be represented in the planning profession, and to ensure that our voices and our communities are not pushed aside. I am enthusiastic about our Division's invaluable role within APA and would be honored to continue to serve our membership if elected as Secretary/Treasurer.

For the past two years, I have worked as a transportation planner at Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, where I specialize in multimodal transportation networks that help people connect with jobs, services, and one another. Since joining Nelson\Nygaard, I have created mobility plans for medical campuses; tested new models of transportation impact fees; and developed on-demand mobility solutions in communities throughout the United States. Previously, I worked as an assistant at New York City Transit Authority and a GIS contractor for software companies in the San Francisco Bay Area. I hold a Bachelor’s Degree in Geography and Community/Environmental Planning from the University of Washington and a Master’s Degree in Urban Planning from Columbia University. My husband, Matt, and I live in Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

As Secretary/Treasurer, I promise to serve the LGBTQ and Planning Division diligently. Since 2015, I have managed our Division’s finances skillfully, as we have grown our membership to nearly 300 and held successful national and local events. I will continue to be an effective financial steward so that we may continue to grow the Division successfully well into the future. Thank you for your consideration.
I am pleased to submit my nomination to serve as Secretary-Treasurer of the LGBTQ and Planning Division. In addition to my day-to-day work as a planner at Enterprise Community Partners, I have over ten years of professional experience in facilitating meetings, planning events, and managing budgets ranging from $500 to $1.6 million. I look forward to putting these skills to work on behalf of our division. As a nine-year member of APA, I take seriously the commitment to forge the future direction of our profession, and to be of service to our community. My vision for our next two years includes continuing to grow the visibility of our sponsored events, building on the successful slate of webinars and in-person meetings of the last two years. To ensure that our efforts support everyone in the profession, I also advocate for listening sessions for our young and mid-career planners, particularly those whose membership has lapsed.

The collective decision in 2016 to rename our Division indicates to me that a democratic and inclusive approach to governing is effective and important. Our outgoing officers, as well as the leaders that have come before them, have positioned us to make a real difference in our communities and our careers. I ask for your vote to continue this work as the division’s next Secretary-Treasurer.

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Observations from NPC17 Facilitated Discussion: “Recent Planning Grad in the Working World”

Laure Wassen

Although not a member of the LGBTQ and Planning Division, my NY Metro Chapter Mentorship this year with Division Past-Chair Neal Stone has added some new topics and awareness to my growing planning vocabulary. Not only did I co-moderate the joint Federal Planning Division (FPD) and LGBTQ and Planning Division facilitated discussion on Tuesday morning of #NPC17 regarding the National Parks Service’s designation of the Stonewall Inn as a National Monument last year, but Neal mentioned another Division facilitated discussion that has been a standing-room-only, repeat session at several previous National Planning Conferences.

This was my first time attending “Recent Planning Grad in the Working World.” While I cannot compare this year’s session to previous ones, I offer up some of the themes and discussion points from this year’s session.

The session, set up as a question and answer between the panelists and young planners, was led by members of the planning community with representatives from public, private, and not-for-profit organizations. The panelists offered advice to planners still at school, new in the profession, or looking for a job on a wide range of issues. The panelists first collected questions from the audience. While the first questions were slow to come, once the questions flowed, it seemed like no one could stop them. After collecting about 20 questions, the panelists combined them together to answer six main topics:

1. Public sector work versus Private Sector Work
2. Selectivity in choosing a job when getting multiple offers
3. The need to go to graduate school to become a planner
4. The role and need to get certified as AICP
5. Common mistakes and things done right by new planners
6. How to deal with politics in the work space.

In general, the discussions were lively, refreshing and interesting. The panelists answered each of the topics, turning them into long conversations. As a planner with two years of experience in the consulting world, I was able to learn was it is like to work for the public sector compared to my daily experience. The discussion on job selection was enlightening, and made me think about the type of environment that I would like to work in more than the “potential offer.” Politics in the workspace is something that planners cannot avoid: tips on softening writing language and understanding perspective made me realize how to tame my personal political views in the workplace, while not going against my own morals. I was really looking forward to the discussions on graduate school and common mistakes done by new planners. However, the discussions focused less on urban planning, but more about common mistakes done by the “caricatured millennial.” After hearing panelists talk about the AICP exam and the new roll out plan, however, I definitely think that becoming a certified planner with the AICP designation (and/or specialty designations) next to my name would give me more opportunities and more assertion in my planning work.

I would like to thank APA National and the LGBTQ and Planning Division for organizing the continuation of this much needed panel at the National Conference for new planners in the workplace, and their experience and willingness to get the next generation of planners ready for their careers. The insight and commentary from other professional planners—seasoned within the profession—is invaluable.

Laure Wassen is a Planner at AKRF, White Plains, New York
LGBTQ and Planning at NPC17: Celebrating 25 Years

The LGBTQ and Planning Division celebrated our 25th anniversary this year during NPC17. Division events included the annual business meeting (photos 1, 4) and sessions on Community Safety (photos 2, 3) and Recent Planning Grad in the Working World (photo 5). The festivities at Bowlmor celebrated the Division’s 25th anniversary (photos 6-10) with Yes Segura and Matthew Ramirez crowned Mr. Planning.

Photos courtesy of Tracey Corbitt, Keith Krum, and Neal Stone.
Update on the Plan4Health Grant

Anna Ricklin

The final year of APA's Plan4Health project is wrapping up, but it doesn't mean the work is winding down.

Groups around the country are convening in cross-sector roundtables big and small to better understand how planners can work together to make health a priority in their communities and in the way they do their jobs.

On June 15, APA's LGBTQ and Planning Division, in partnership with the New York Metro Chapter and the Planning and Law Division, held the Creating Healthy Communities Roundtable. More than 80 people, about one-third of whom were planners, attended the half-day event hosted by the Pace University Land Use Law Center in White Plains. The rest of the attendees were largely health professionals, elected officials, and members representing other built environment sectors.

Inspired in part by APA's recent participation in the Joint Call to Action for Healthy Communities, the event featured regional and national leaders from across the fields of planning, health, food systems, parks, and economic development. Two speakers from public health emphasized that the path to improving everyone's health requires less focus on individual behavior and more focus on the whole community. Sylvia Pirani, director of the New York State Health Department's Office of Public Health Practice, reported that her department actively seeks partnerships outside of health.

Dr. Patricia Ruppert, health commissioner in Rockland County, New York, invited everyone to join her at the Rockland County Population Health Summit in 2018: “Planners have the important job of ensuring people have healthy schools and communities.”

Attendees then had the chance to interact with one another as they broke into small groups to share their own healthy communities successes and challenges and brainstorm opportunities to partner for greater impact in the New York region.

The lively conversations yielded a number of ideas and significant themes, including:

- the importance of celebrating cultural diversity when engaging community members
- seeing health through the lens of equity and justice
- using data to inform decision making

Groups put forth solutions, too:

- the creation of nonprofit public-private partnerships
- new laws to protect and ensure affordable housing long term
- communications campaigns to raise awareness among the general public about the planning-health connection

The positive energy in the room lingered as the meeting ended and people made plans to meet again. It was clear that this event not only launched new relationships, it also motivated new thinking and new ways of doing things.

Stay tuned as APA continues to share stories from Plan4Health and the many exciting ways that planners are taking action for healthy communities.

Anna Ricklin, AICP, is manager of APA’s Planning and Community Health Center.
Dedicated to Health Care for Philadelphia’s LBGT Community: The Mazzoni Center

Justin Dula, AICP and Neal Stone, AICP

The Mazzoni Center, in the heart of Philadelphia, is the only single health care provider in the region that specifically targets the unique health care needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities. With only minor service interruptions to its patients and clients, and in spite of going through significant organizational turmoil, Mazzoni moved to occupy a brand new facility on May 30, 2017 on Bainbridge Street, just east of Broad Street.

On June 20th, APA’s LGBTQ and Planning Division’s Co Vice-Chair, Communications, Justin Dula, AICP, organized a group of approximately 25 attendees for a 2-hour evening tour of the new facility with Philadelphia’s Queer Urbanist Exchange. The tour was conducted by Mazzoni’s Director of Development, Mytili Jagannathan, to showcase the four floors of new space that will be used for one of the newest and most comprehensive LGBT service facilities in the nation.

Mazzoni Center is now going through a time of turmoil that is threatening the continued existence of the organization, has continued to provide services to clients and move to the new location. There were substantial management and board changes after allegations surfaced of illegal and improper conduct among management and doctors after the groundbreaking of the new building. Now, Mazzoni is working to enter into an era of transparency and accountability and regain the trust of the LGBT community, particularly patients and staff of color, transgender and gender non-conforming. The construction of a new facility amidst this organizational crisis may be one of the few bright spots for the Mazzoni Center in the past months and can hopefully be a catalyst for reconnection with the community.

Founded in 1979 as an all-volunteer clinic to serve the needs of sexual minorities in Philadelphia around the time when the first cases of HIV/AIDS began to appear in the early 1980s, the organization quickly responded, becoming the oldest AIDS service organization in Pennsylvania, and the fourth-oldest in the nation. As Mazzoni grew and evolved to meet the needs of the community, it combined HIV/AIDS-related services with a broad array of interconnected health care and supportive services: outreach, prevention, education, direct medical and care services, psychosocial services, legal services, and support groups. Now, over 35,000 individuals benefit annually from the services of the Center and demands have continued to grow.

Easily accessible to public transit, the existing building that Mazzoni renovated was formerly home to a Department of Public Welfare office that had been unoccupied for several years. The total gut renovation substantially expanded the space available to Mazzoni’s existing spectrum of services, which now includes a primary care medical practice, mental health counseling program, case management, housing-subsidy program, and food bank, in addition to all of the previously-existing services such as legal services, education and prevention programs, bringing all of Mazzoni’s programs and services to a single, central location.

The new Mazzoni Center location nearly doubles the size of the family and community medical practice space and creates more opportunities for hiring additional clinicians; it incorporates additional wellness services and provides care to many more people than the old space allowed. Mazzoni will also greatly expand its Open Door behavioral-health program, add several more counseling rooms and therapists, and open the region’s first Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) dedicated to providing recovery services specifically for LGBTQ individuals struggling with

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As 2017 LGBTQ Pride Month Ends, LGBTQ Streetscapes are Just Beginning

Perris Straughter

In a midnight spectacle of bright lights, paint, and steam, voices shouting and camera flashes, dozens of surprised onlookers—teeming with excitement when they realized what was happening—witnessed a group of construction workers painting rainbow crosswalks on the corner of Christopher and 7th Avenue late last month. Just in time for Pride. The intersection is less than a stone’s throw from Stonewall, now the nation’s first national landmark in honor of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) history.

Somewhat surprisingly, NYC’s West Village, undeniably one of the oldest and largest LGBTQ neighborhoods in the nation, received its stripes after many other cities, including LA’s West Hollywood, San Francisco’s Castro, DC’s Dupont Circle, Atlanta’s Midtown, and many more. The trend of LGBTQ branding as part of streetscapes began decades ago. Although it has become more widespread as of late, markers of LGBTQ identity on the urban landscape are nothing new. Rainbow street signs adorned Philadelphia’s Gayborhood long before the appearance of crosswalks there. In Chicago there are rainbow pylons and other streetscape fixtures that are part of the Legacy Walk on North Halsted Street, a whole streetscape project dedicated to LGBTQ culture and history.

Although volumes have been written about these initiatives in LGBTQ circles, that dialogue has not extended into planning circles to the same extent. It’s a phenomenon worth looking into for urban planners and for economic development professionals, particularly as the trend could extend beyond the largest cities and most well-known LGBTQ neighborhoods to smaller ones.

As a way of priming that dialogue, I want to throw out some questions urban planners should consider:

- Do concrete representations of LGBTQ culture and history in the physical landscape help solidify their presence and status?
- Do these interventions have a positive impact on tourism, local businesses, and/or property values?
- How can we gather data about this?
- Will LGBTQ spaces become tourist destinations and contribute even more to local economic development than they do now?

It goes without saying that there is a social benefit to these spaces—which arose as the only safe spaces for LGBTQ people and are even themselves tarnished with a history of violence—Stonewall being a celebrated example with the 1969 uprising.

Today, throughout the world, LGBTQ people (merely because of their place of birth) still face death and torture. They flee certain countries for their lives—often to urban centers in safer countries like the United States—as first points of safe haven.

We know that extrajudicial killings of people for being “presumed gay” are still being conducted daily. Are we doing enough to advocate for them and prepare for what we know will be the inevitable arrival of these

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Member Profile: Joshua Dudas

Where are you currently living?
Tucson, Arizona

What is your educational background?
My education has been a nonstop endeavor since I graduated high school in 2012. I attended Bedford High School in New Hampshire, about an hour’s drive north of Boston, Massachusetts. Proceeding this with great excitement, I was accepted into the University of Arizona in Tucson. I then graduated with a BA in Sociology and a Marketing minor in the class of 2016. Reenrolling, I then became a degree seeking candidate with an MS in Planning for the class of 2018. I will hopefully be done with school for a while. However, if I did decide to go back, it would be for an MBA.

What is encompassed in your professional background?
My work experience, surprisingly, includes nothing in the realm planning. This is due to my unquenchable thirst for knowledge and skillsets. My first pre-professional job was on campus with a research lab, the Bio5 Institute in a public relations position. There I got my first taste as to what it was like to work in an office setting. I promoted the great work and discoveries conducted by world class researchers, as well as facilitating tours in secure areas.

I then became a Business Intelligence Analyst at Tech Launch Arizona, an on-campus facility that helps commercialize university research products. I wrote executive summaries for stakeholders, which meant reading hundreds of pages containing relevant information and condensing it into less than two pages. Simultaneously, I was interning at my school’s LGBTQ Resource Center. I helped promote and facilitate events, and created a welcoming safe atmosphere for queer students to take advantage of.

Not being able to sit still, I also became a Student Brand Ambassador for Kaplan Test Prep, which provides testing material for pre-college and pre-graduate school tests like the SAT, MCAT or GRE. What was unique about this position was that it was virtual, with all communication and work being conducted through the Google interface. My original role was to connect with pre-professional organizations and formulate partnerships with our products. Then, I would follow-up with presentations and provide reliant resources and support for the club. This involvement gave members resources and guidance to achieve their goals of attending their dream graduate schools. I was then fortunate enough to expand and train new hires, help decide on social media campaigns, audit presentations, publish host seminars, post available positions, recruit high-performing course alumni, and become a mentor. This remains my primary occupation and biggest opportunity for growth.

What drew you into the planning field?
Ever since I was a little boy, I always had a strong fascination with cars. I was a little obsessed. Luckily, my parents were able to feed my curiosity, providing me toys and opportunities to be immersed in city life. When I was a baby, we moved from my birthplace of Chicago, Illinois to the Washington DC suburbs. There, we lived directly adjacent to a Metro station, a highway, and a bus depot. There was a pedestrian bridge above the highway where I would look at all the cars passing by, sometimes for over an hour. As awkward as I sound, we have not even mentioned all the wooden, foam and cardboard blocks I would use to create cities. These would not be complete without Matchbox and Hot Wheels cars with the plastic road pieces to connect the structures. I would even make my sister help perfectly align parked cars or construct beautiful towns for her dolls.

These childhood hobbies then transferred into a desire to start my own car company or become an architect. This quickly stopped when I realized how much time I would be on a computer. I then tried Business, but felt it was not creative enough for all my unique ideas. I finally decided that Sociology would be the best, non-committed fit for my future career. In that department, I took an urbanism course. Little did I know that
it would change the course of my future ambitions. This lead me to pursue further knowledge and expertise in the field of Urban Planning.

When and why did you join the LGBTQ and Planning Division?

My journey to becoming a part of the LGBTQ and Planning Division began online. Fortunately, MS in Planning students at the University of Arizona receive a free membership to the APA. Being curious, I explored beyond the general membership to the different APA Divisions. I decided to join online, paying my dues and becoming an official member, receiving the amazing badge. I also connected via my LinkedIn profile, enabling me to engage in more one-on-one conversations. Fast forwarding to the Spring semester, I decided to attend the APA NPC17 in New York. There I went to an event where I met and mingled with fellow members. I felt comfortable and free to connect about relatable ideologies. I plan to seek out further opportunities as they arise.

Has your gay identity influenced your approach to planning? How?

Being bisexual has drastically impacted my approach towards Planning. I think that LGBTQ individuals face many adversities, as any minority does. LGBTQ members live in all corners of the world, human beings who deserve dignity and the chance to thrive like anybody else. I think that knowledge is power, and making Planners aware of these issues will best prepare them to make informed decisions for all members of the community. Going through my own struggles gave me strength that I want others to have. It only takes one spark to start a rampant fire.

How have you handled your sexual identity?

I am currently out as bisexual to the world. I came out my Sophomore year of college in 2010. Being closeted caused me so much pain; the pain of living a lie and not being my true self. Fortunately, my friends, family, and colleagues were all highly supportive of me. I lacked confidence at first, but as time progressed I really began to embrace myself as a one of a kind individual. Unfortunately, though, many LGBTQ individuals face isolation, prejudice and even are killed because of who they are, who they are born to love. Embracing myself, I became an intern at my school’s LGBTQ Resource Center. There I learned all about Pride, history and members of my local community. I will continue to advocate and fight for rights for the rest of my life.

In your opinion, what are the most pressing issues of the LGBTQ+ community that we as planners can address?

I am so grateful to have been born in the richest country on earth, the United States of America. Unfortunately, though, your location within our great country truly affects the quality of life for LGBTQ residents. I also am a firm believer in the Freedom of Speech, which sadly encompasses negativity. Regardless, all Americans deserve the same freedoms as the majority heterosexual population. I think that there are an endless amount of issues that marginalize LGBTQ members of the community. This includes civil rights protections, mental health, senior care, homelessness, domestic violence, and narcotic consumption. One thing that can impact all of this is policy. Laws, acts, protections and punitive actions that are outlined for everyone at the federal level. Prejudices cannot hide behind the masked doors of religion or alternative facts amongst our politics. Policy is what is going to grant and guarantee LGBTQ community members the rights that they were born with.

How has living and working in Tucson, Arizona shaped who you are as an individual? As a planning practitioner/student?

Growing up in the D.C. metropolitan area gave me a cosmopolitan perspective, although it was also competitive, fast paced, and overwhelming. Moving to Tucson, Arizona showed me how to stop and smell the roses. This city showed me that life does not have to be a blinding race to an unknown finish line. This Southwestern desert town is located in the Sonoran Desert. It is uniquely the second most bio-diverse place on Earth. The community is so friendly and down to earth, with tons of pride for their community. So much has happened to me in college. Being in Tucson gave me the freedom...
to be myself and ultimately come out of the closet.

Tucson faces unique challenges in the planning realm. Poverty, lack of access, water scarcity, educational attainment and crime are all strong factors that remain a high priority for planners in Tucson. We are also beginning to experience rapid growth not seen for decades, giving rise to a variety of opinions on solutions from stakeholders. The Southern Section APA and Arizona APA Chapter all collaborate on these issues. It has given me a unique perspective to what the Grand Canyon faces now and down the road.

**What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction in life?**

One of my biggest accomplishments in life was beating cancer. Upon tests, ultrasounds and examinations, I was diagnosed with Testicular Cancer in February of 2016. It was later discovered post removal that I was Stage II. This meant that the cancer had travelled to my lymph nodes and would require numerous rounds of chemotherapy. I was devastated and shocked. I had to withdraw from school, clubs, and work. This all took place during the last semester of my Senior year. I lost my hair, amongst a long list of short- and long-term repercussions. This was also the final nail in the coffin for the relationship with my at the time boyfriend, which was already failing. The break up really destroyed my confidence and sense of hope. But nonetheless, I persisted onward with my treatment.

I underwent heavy rounds of chemotherapy, numerous surgeries and complications throughout my journey. I even had newly developed surgery, only available at one hospital in the world, the Mayo Clinic in Phoenix, Arizona, less than a two hours’ drive.

I always try to turn anything around positively, though. I sought out counseling, acupuncture, a healthy diet, and yoga to try and heal my mind, body and spirit. I also had tremendous support from my family, friends, and even from my ex. I applied to graduate school, which lead to an acceptance. I even graduated early from my undergraduate role, due to all the summer school I took.

Numerous doors opened from cancer. I was able to be a part of several young adult survivor retreats. There I related to others who experienced the same things as I did. I expanded my network and was able to travel across the country. I became a stronger and more appreciative person for the simple things in life. I am also happy to report that I have been classified in remission for a year as of May 2017.

**What kind of adventures have you been a part of? Where have you been able to travel?**

From a young age, my parents emphasized getting out of my comfort zone and experiencing new things. They did this by acquainting me with traveling from Day One. My dad frequendy travelled for work, so I would go on trips with him all over the country. My extended family lived in Arizona, so we would journey out there numerous times for the holidays. I lived in four different states: Illinois, Virginia, New Hampshire, and Arizona. I was an exchange student in high school to the utopian governed country of Denmark. We would vacation up and down the East Coast (Maine to Florida).

I am extremely fortunate that by the age of 18 I had been to more than half the U.S. states and numerous Mediterranean and western European countries (Italy, Monaco, France, Spain, Portugal, Spain, United King-
Cancer survivors are some of the funniest, positive, resilient and inspiring people you’ll ever meet. The community is strong and supportive. In fact, I am eligible for more opportunities to attend retreats.

**How has cancer changed your views on planning?**

These experiences have exposed me to people who want nothing more than to live normal lives. This has really helped my heart grow three sizes. Two words: health and care. Surviving cancer isn’t over when you’re in remission, debt ravages many fighters and survivors. We need a system that can help people the best way possible, and get people back on their feet. They deserve the best care the United States can offer, with as swift and painless treatment as possible.

Looking at this from a monetary perspective, it makes sense to provide people the best care. Survivors can be their best selves and ultimately pay for themselves as much as possible. My entire existence is a real-life example. Without health insurance I would have had to face further suffering due to the inability to obtain the best care, as well as hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt, at the age of twenty-two. I would not be able to attend graduate school, gain all the great opportunities that the United States has to offer. I would have poor credit too, robbing me of the ability to purchase possessions I’d like, let alone require for my survival. Health care needs reform, but cities also need to be structured in ways that prevent people from developing cancer. They also need to remain adaptive and receptive to people that may not be able to perform functions that many take for granted. The United States has a long, long, long way to go before we can declare ourselves an equal opportunity country, with freedom for all. We have made significant strides, but the work ahead requires cooperation, collaboration, and selflessness.

**Where do you see yourself ten years from now?**

Ten years from now, at the prime age of 33, I hope to see myself at peace. I truly do not know what lies ahead, but I can most definitely attribute feelings I hope to possess.

I hope to be at a place in life where I am fully comfortable, am handling problems well and relinquishing control of things I cannot influence.

I hope that I have stepped foot on every continent and been exposed to numerous cultures and people that drastically contrast myself.

I hope that I have great joy and love from my friends and family. Perhaps my three siblings will have had kids? Maybe I will be married? My dog sure will love me.

In terms of my professional life, I have too many ideas to even keep track of. My mind is like a pinball machine, constantly firing, placing me in unpredictable circumstances. Call me a workaholic American, but I have a great love for entrepreneurial ventures. I think the Internet holds the key to success and the future.

I would love to start my own company somehow tying my interests in marketing, society, and urban planning together with the powerful force of the Internet. Perhaps adapting communities to drones or automated cars? Attempt at encouraging further advocacy for neighborhoods, educating people about their rights? Enabling people to take action and protest? Turning our crumbling retail infrastructure into indoor farms?

I also have a great interest in holding an elected position. Give me your vote and I will do my absolute best to do what’s righteous. I think at twenty-three years old, you are extremely creative and have the whole world available to you. The possibilities are endless, I can honestly do anything I put my mind to.

**How can I get in touch with you?**

Great question! I welcome any form of connection, I think it fosters humility and friendship. The best way to get a hold of me is: joshuadudas@email.arizona.edu. I have a LinkedIn profile if you search Joshua Dudas. You are also more than welcome to follow me on Instagram & Snapchat at @LetsDudas-Thing. Thank you so much for taking the time and I hope to hear from you!
displaced and marginalized people as they seek asylum in our communities?

Furthermore, do planners across the country have an affirmative role in partnering with local LGBTQ communities to anticipate these demographic shifts and to identify ways to represent LGBTQ culture and history in the built environment, even as LGBTQ identity and politics remains controversial in many parts of the country?

What do these big city examples mean for smaller cities? Should every small city’s “gay street” be branded an LGBTQ street or neighborhood in brick and mortar if local stakeholders demand it?

Moreover, is it likely that this trend will extend across gay neighborhoods and streets and corners across the nation?

APA’s LGBTQ and Planning Division welcomes dialogue on this, and remains active in writing articles and even sponsoring talks at APA conferences and other venues on this very issue.

Beyond discussing and measuring the impacts of LGBTQ branding or placemaking of neighborhoods, planners need to consider neighborhood change. Especially as urban neighborhood experience gentrification and even neighborhoods like the West Village have arguably become “less gay” over the decades, it’s important to understand how the various ways planning, development, and capital improvements affect LGBTQ neighborhoods.

Will these LGBTQ neighborhoods—destinations for LGBT people but also symbols of LGBTQ history and struggle—remain LGBTQ as time goes on? Should they? Are LGBTQ neighborhoods at risk along with many urban ethnic communities?

It is now time for planners across the country to elevate these issues to mainstream discourse, and address these complex questions with much greater rigor and urgency.

Perris Straughter, AICP, is Co Vice-Chair for Programs & Research of the LGBTQ and Planning Division.

Mazzoni, cont’d from page 8

addition.

The new building also features a ‘town hall’ gathering space, where community events, educational programs, and wellness workshops will take place. As Ms. Jagannathan and Board of Directors members advocate about the new facility: “Providing our staff with a more functional and efficient work environment is another important step in improving overall delivery of care. Our staff is truly the heart and soul of what we do, and the reason that so many people have entrusted us with their care for so many years. Bringing the full staff together under one roof will foster more effective staff collaboration and communication, with common spaces designed and configured to promote meaningful interaction among our many care and service providers.”

The APA’s LGBTQ and Planning Division wishes the Mazzoni Center the very best in its efforts to strengthen it accountability and transparency needed to reconcile relations with our community and continue to fulfill its exceptionally important mission in the Philadelphia region. Congratulations on a successful transition to your new home, where we hope the newly restructured and community based organization will provide improved services for decades to come.

Justin Dula, AICP, is Co Vice-Chair for Communications of the LGBTQ and Planning Division. Neal Stone, AICP, is Past Chair of the LGBTQ and Planning Division.

Photos courtesy of Justin Dula and Christian Xtn Hansen.

Divisionshout-Out!

Congratulations to Division member Abdulla Al Shehhi whose article “(Trans)forming Planning: The Inclusion and Seclusion of LGBT Individuals in Contemporary Planning Theory and Practice” from the Spring 2016 issue of LGBTQ & Planning Quarterly will be reprinted as The Commissioner feature in the October 2017 issue of Planning magazine.
The LGBTQ and Planning Division addresses planning topics and issues that relate to the LGBTQ community by providing a forum for exchanging ideas and information. LGBTQ and Planning provides a professional network for planners who are division members and a mechanism that allows friends of the division and the LGBTQ community to support LGBTQ and Planning’s mission.

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The LGBTQ and Planning Division relies on APA to provide accurate contact information for our membership.

Send us your article ideas or let us know about upcoming social & educational events in your area by sending an email to lgbtqplanning@gmail.com!

The LGBTQ & Planning Quarterly, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the LGBTQ and Planning Division of the American Planning Association. We welcome articles, letters, suggestions and information regarding workshops and other educational opportunities of interest to our membership. Please forward your submissions by email to the LGBTQ & Planning Quarterly,

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lgbtqplanning@gmail.com

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