Texas A&M landscape architecture programs ranked among nation’s best in national report

A report published in the November/December issue of the DesignIntelligence journal, ranked the landscape architecture program at Texas A&M University among the nation’s best in a variety of categories and named the dean of the Texas A&M College of Architecture and a landscape architecture professor among the nation’s most admired educators.

In the report, "2008 Education Survey and Rankings: America’s Best Architecture & Design Schools," the Texas A&M Bachelor of Landscape Architecture program ranked fifth nationally among public institutions and tied with Cornell University for sixth place overall. The Master of
Three graduates named outstanding alumni

Texas A&M landscape architecture graduates Jesus “Chuy” Hinojosa ’58, Scott Slaney ’76, and John Watson ’43 were honored as Outstanding Alumni of the Texas A&M College of Architecture.

The award is given annually to alumni who have distinguished themselves as pioneers in their professions and leaders in their respective communities.

Hinojosa, a professor emeritus in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning, is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects. He has led business in the world. The list is compiled annually, including professional planners, educators, government officials and others interested in Latino communities.

Hinojosa was named a fellow for his contributions to the profession. Hinojosa was chosen in 2007.

In 2006, the office of the President and former Milwaukee mayor John Norquist and author James Howard Kunstler.

According to event chairwoman Cecilia Giusti, an assistant professor in urban planning, “Dialogo” participants also identified a “need to establish a more inclusive agenda, incorporating a culture that may be embraced by local communities.”

The one-day gathering drew a crowd of more than 100 attendees from throughout Texas, including professional planners, educators, government officials and others interested in Latino community development.

Hosted by the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning at Texas A&M, the workshop at Texas A&M’s Memorial Student Center was part of an ongoing effort led by the Latinos and Planning Division of the American Planning Association to shape the national planning agenda for Latino communities and Latino planners.

“The next five years, Latinos are projected to become the largest racial/ethnic group in Texas,” explained Giusti. “This event provided a unique opportunity to focus on special issues and challenges accompanying this shifting demographic. The topic was intentionally broad to encourage the participation of everyone with an interest in the Latino community and its burgeoning influence on Texas.”

Keynote speaker Edward Garza, former mayor of San Antonio, talked about how to improve communities with better planning and development strategies. He currently heads the San Antonio office of EDAWN, Inc., a national landscape and development firm, and runs Urban One 30, a real estate company specializing in residential restoration projects in San Antonio.

A detailed report of the Latino Dialogo in Texas discussion and conclusions is currently being prepared and will be distributed to workshop participants and to the American Planning Association’s Latinos and Planning Division.

“The report, defining a Latino agenda for planning in Texas, ‘should help define the national Latino planning agenda,’” Giusti said.

Latino Dialogo in Texas was also sponsored by the College of Architecture and the Center for Housing and Urban Development at Texas A&M in partnership with the cities of Bryan and College Station, Texas, and the Brazos Valley Council of Governments. Also joining in sponsorship were the Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity and the Office of the Dean of Faculties at Texas A&M.
New faculty begin teaching, research

Jesse Saginer joined Texas A&M after completing a Ph.D. in Urban Studies and Public Affairs in 2006 at Cleveland State University. His research interests include real estate development, the impact of environmental contamination on real estate values, market analysis, the role of economic development programs on urban redevelopment, and public-private partnerships for new development.

While obtaining his Ph.D., Saginer was an independent consultant whose projects included market analyses for residential and commercial development, the impact of various governmental policies on housing markets, and property value, the adaptive reuse of residential structures, economic impact analyses, and the use of eminent domain for economic development. As an adjunct professor at Cleveland State University, he taught courses on economics, urban affairs, market analysis, and urban development finance. He has been hired as an assistant professor with primary teaching duties in the Urban Affairs department. Bruce Dvorak joined the landscape architecture and urban planning department fall 2007 from the University of Illinois. His areas of interest include sustainable development, the selection of firms to design and construct a green roof pilot project on the ASLA’s national headquarters building in Washington, D.C. Dvorak is a Fabric Architecture magazine advisory committee member, reviewing articles considered for publication. He received a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of Minnesota and a Master of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of Illinois. His areas of interest include green roof technology, sustainable site design and sustainable planning and construction.

Jesse Saginer
Bruce Dvorak
Eric Dumbaugh

Eric Dumbaugh joined the faculty in 2006. He holds a Ph.D. in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Georgia Tech, as well as joint master’s degrees in engineering and city planning and a bachelor’s degree in English literature.

His research focuses broadly on the design and implementation of multi-modal transportation systems, paying particular attention to how they affect the built and natural environments. His ongoing research examines strategies for integrating capacity, traffic safety, and community livability objectives into a complete, context-based approach to roadway design.

Dumbaugh has served as an invited speaker on this subject before numerous groups including the Federal Highway Administration, the Institute of Transportation Engineers, the Urban Land Institute, and the Congress for the New Urbanism, among others.

He recently received the Transportation Research Board’s 2007 award for Outstanding Paper in Geometric Design. Dumbaugh is currently serving on a task force charged with revising the Texas Department of Transportation’s roadway design manual to better address sustainability and community livability objectives.

Eric Dumbaugh

A new Graduate Certificate Program in Transportation Planning was recently approved as a new degree program within the Texas A&M departments of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning and Civil Engineering, the Texas Transportation Institute, and the Bush School of Government and Public Service.

The program, directed by Eric Dumbaugh, assistant LAUP professor, will provide students with a multi-faceted, interdisciplinary education in the field of transportation. Participating students will receive both a substantive background on the practice of transportation planning, as well as more specialized instruction in one of three interdisciplinary focus areas: multimodal systems planning, transportation and urban design, or transportation policy.

Students enrolled in the certificate program will take a comprehensive core of courses, as well as electives, that are required to address a real-world transportation problem. Students completing the Transportation Planning Certificate Program will graduate with both a broad understanding of the role of transportation in contemporary society as well as an interdisciplinary perspective on how to best address transportation-related problems. Two grants totaling more than $162,000 from the Texas Transportation Institute’s University Transportation Center for Mobility provided initial funding for the program. Forster Nolbissi, LAUP department head, is the principal investigator on the TTU/UTCM grants.

Faculty engage in cutting-edge research, service

Faculty engage in cutting-edge research, service

Sam Brody is conducting research on sustainable development and resiliency in coastal zones. He has multiple projects in Texas and Florida funded by organizations including the National Science Foundation, NOAA/Sea Grant, and the National Park Service.

Eric Dumbaugh’s research focuses on the design and implementation of multi-modal transportation systems, specifically, how they affect the built and natural environments. He also serves as faculty liaison for the Master of Urban Planning program’s emphasis area in transportation planning, policy, and design.

As a new faculty member, Bruce Dvorak is beginning his scholarship by looking at the application of urban sustainable technologies. His expertise and immediate research interest includes green roof technology. He plans to test various green roof systems with a pilot project on the main campus at and test plots on the Texas A&M University Riverside Campus.

Cecilia Giusti is involved in the evaluation of the Beaumont Housing Authority’s recently received HOPE VI public housing grant. She is also working on a project titled “Transportation Infrastructure Structure and Quality of Life for Disadvantaged Populations” in collaboration with Chanam Lee. Chang-Shan Huang is on faculty development leave in fall 2007 and spring 2008, when he’ll be on an extensive speaking tour of China. He is also working on a book dealing with design for health.

Chanan Lee’s research focuses on active living communities. Her work examines the land use and urban design attributes that promote physical activity, non-motorized transportation and public health. Her current projects address these issues for high-risk population such as minorities, low-income populations, patients and children.

Ming-Han Li is conducting a research project titled “BIorestoration for Storm Water Quality in Texas.” This $543,000 project is sponsored by the Texas Department of Transportation. Ming-Han received the College of Architecture Graduate Teaching Award in October. He was also recently appointed book review editor for Landscape and Urban Planning journal.

Tim Lomax has been involved in measuring urban congestion levels and evaluating strategies to improve mobility for more than 25 years. The team of researchers he works with have developed and applied several of the performance measures used by transportation departments and planning agencies across the nation.

Michael Murphy spent the fall 2007 semester at Santa Clara Study Center in Italy. He is also heading up the department’s partnership for Community Outreach, which offers design and planning services to small towns and not-for-profit groups as part of our efforts at active student learning.

Forster Nolbissi was elected a fellow of the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture and was inducted at their August meeting. Thomas M. Woodfin, Jr. received his doctorate from the Texas A&M Department of Geography in December 2007. His dissertation in historical geography was “The Cartography of Capitalism: Cartographic Evidence for the Emergence of the Capitalist World-System in Early Modern Europe.”

Transportation planning grad certificate program offered

Jesse Saginer
Bruce Dvorak
Eric Dumbaugh

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Students provide design concepts for Buffalo Bend Park

Aggies are playing their part in the revitalization of Houston’s Buffalo Bayou. An undergraduate landscape architecture class was asked in fall 2006 to provide design concepts for Buffalo Bayou Partnership’s Buffalo Bend Park.

The partnership is a nonprofit organization that oversees Buffalo Bayou improvements. The site, located just west of the Houston Ship Channel’s turning basin, has been heavily modified by more than 30 years of use as the dumping ground for sediment extracted from Houston storm sewers.

The massive amount of soil, which raised the site’s elevation 20-30 feet, provided a good base for the intended use of the park as an environmental education site. The park will focus on showing how wetlands purify polluted bayou waters. The class met with Scott Barnes, the partnership’s director of conservation, who filled them in on the partnership’s goals for the site.

From there the students, working in teams, developed a number of alternatives that have been used in decision-making about the park’s final plans.

Landscape architecture students present design concepts for Buffalo Bend Park to representatives of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership.
‘Best of the Best’

H-GAC recognizes student-designed park in Spring, TX

An effort that encompassed three years, three studios and countless student field trips to a floodplain near Spring, Texas brought recognition for the Texas A&M landscape architecture program and a new recreation spot for the area’s residents.

The Timber Lane Utility District Master Park Plan, a 160-acre design project undertaken by Texas A&M graduate and undergraduate landscape architecture students in professor Jon Rodiek’s studios, was recognized Feb. 19 by at the Houston-Galveston Area, with a $207 Parks and Natural Areas Best of the Best Award.

The master plan, which includes four parks, is located along the Black Bank of Cypress Creek adjacent to the Timber Lane subdivision in North Harris County, about 25 miles from downtown Houston. The site, contained primarily on public land within the Cypress Creek floodplain, was designed over three years by several student teams.

The effort began in 2005, when student in landscape architecture professor Jon Rodiek’s LAND 620 graduate studio developed plans for the 21-acre Sandpiper Park and nine-acre Highland Glen Park, as well as the 4.5-mile Cypress Creek Hike and Bike Trail that connects the two. The plan was then presented to the project clients, the Timber Lane Municipal Utility District.

This procedure was repeated in fall 2006 semester when Rodiek’s LAND 620 students designed another park proposal on 90 acres of land that the Union Pacific Railroad wanted to sell to the utility district. And again, in spring 2007, undergraduate LAND 421 students worked on a 36-acre design for the North Hills Park and Highland Glen portion of the master plan.

Over the years, the utility district ultimately funded student projects, which included trips to the area, a site inventory, soil testing, water quality analysis, plant identification and soil examination.

“...and then build a..." said Rodiek. "We rented vans and drove down there and back countless times." The students’ plans moved from proposal to reality when, on Nov. 10, 2007, approximately 200 neighborhood volunteers gathered for a training session then proceeded to build the student-designed Cypress Creek Hike and Bike Trail and a portion of one of the two connect- ing parks.

The utility district is pursing funding options for the remaining areas of the students’ master plan.

Rodiek lauded Bud Gessell, a Timber Lane Utility District board member, for his leadership in the project. Rodiek said Gessell and the board “actually got out in front of the area’s development to secure a recreational facility and land for the people of the Timberlane Utility District.”

Student effort garners national recognition

Work helps Beaumont Housing Authority land $20 million federal grant

Students from the Texas A&M College of Architecture helped the Beaumont Housing Authority win a national award by providing designs, master plans and supporting community research for the renovation of Magnolia Gardens, a BHA housing project damaged by Hurricane Rita.

The housing authority received the 2007 National Award of Merit from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials for its collaboration with the Texas A&M students.

Demolition and rebuilding of the project site, which began summer 2007, was funded by a $20 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. A redesign proposal for Magnolia Gardens, which helped garner the grant, was developed by architects who used the landscape students’ revitalization concepts, as well as a mound of data that informed the project, which was compiled by planning and land development students.

In spring 2006, 10 students in Nancy Volkman’s Open Space Development II studio spent the semester surveying Magnolia Gardens residents and talking with Beaumont Housing Authority staff and city of Beaumont personnel. The housing project had been destroyed by Hurricane Rita, which ripped ashore in September 2005.

The students created a design concept for the housing project’s revitalization, which they presented to a panel of residents, architects and community leaders. Those designs provided the basis for the revitaliza- tion project.

Students in Shannon Van Zandt’s Neighborhood Revitalization class and Cecilia Giusti’s Urban and Regional Economic Development class also traveled to Beaumont, where they reviewed site plans and dis- cussed options for bringing investment and economic development to the beleaguered neighborhood. The students met with Robert Reyna, BHA executive director; Cleveland Com, BHA planning and development director; and Andre Lewis, HOPE VI coordinator.

Also assisting this initiative were students in a landscape architect- ure and urban planning class taught by June Martin.

Regan, dean of the Texas A&M College of Architecture, and Michael D. Murphy, Ph.D., a professor of landscape architecture at Texas A&M, as well as two of the ‘25 Most Admired Educators of 2008.’

Regan, a professor of architecture at Texas A&M, has served as dean of the College of Architecture since 1998. Prior to this appoint- ment, he served as dean of architecture college at three major universities – Auburn University, North Carolina State University and the University of Miami. As dean, Regan has greatly expanded the global influence of the college of architecture and promoted interdisciplinary collaboration in research and education between faculty in the college’s four de- partments. He is committed to international study and research as a catalyst for global collaboration in issues related to the built and virtual environments in both education and professional practice.

Murphy, who joined the Texas A&M faculty in 1969, is interested in interdisciplinary design and programming, environmental planning and design and landscape architecture theory. His 2005 book, “Landscape Architecture The- ory: An Evolving Body of Thought,” published by Waveland Press, examines landscape archi- tecture as a process responding to biological, physical and cultural systems. Texas A&M architecture programs also fai- red well in the report. The Master of Architectural Program at Texas A&M ranked ninth na- tionally among public universities and came in third overall by the surveyed firms in the study’s southern region.

In the skills assessment category, the Texas A&M architecture programs ranked third na- tionally in construction materials and meth- ods and in computer applications.

There are 115 architecture programs ac- credited by the NAAB.

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Department hosts Chengzhao Wu visiting research scholar from China

Chengzhao Wu, professor and head of the Eco-Landscape, Park and Recreation Planning research center at Tongji University in Shanghai, China, was a visiting research scholar in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning.

Wu’s main research and teaching interests include eco-landscape planning and design, national park planning and management, and urban planning. He also teaches heritage protection and tourism planning.

A designer and prolific writer, Wu’s published work includes more than 60 papers, seven books, and a book translation. Two of his design projects were sponsored by the National Science Foundation committee of China and he has completed more than 65 projects for local governments, including the Tai Lake Sustainable Development Project, to sustainable development planning of World Cultural Heritage of Pingyao and Lijian, and landscape planning of Stone Forest National Park.

Publication edited by Rodiek cited as a top science journal

Landscape and Urban Planning, an international peer-reviewed journal edited by Jon Rodiek, professor of landscape architecture and urban planning at Texas A&M’s College of Architecture, is ranked as a top science journal for 2006 by the ISI Web of Knowledge, a comprehensive online research platform.

The ratings are compiled by Journal Citation Reports, which ranks thousands of journals in the sciences by the number of times their articles are cited in other scholarly journals.

Landscape and Urban Planning was rated highly in a number of categories. It was the most-cited journal in the urban studies category, No. 3 in environmental studies, No. 7 in physical geography, No. 6 in geography and No. 44 in ecology.

"A number of categories most relevant [to the journal] are actually Urban Studies and Environmental Studies," said Louis Tassinary, associate dean for research at the Texas A&M College of Architecture. "It’s quite remarkable that his journal also appeared in the top half of the journals in the ecology category, and the top 25% of the journal in the geography categories."

"Scientists are now willing to go out on a limb and talk about their science as it applies to a more useful, environmental perspective so that’s helping us out a lot," said Rodiek. "I think that’s the reason why, for the moment at least, the journal is enjoying this success."

When he began editing the journal in 1990, he said he told the journal’s editorial board the journal needed to be broadcast to a large audience. "They said no, no, it’s way too broad and way too watered down. We need to be more focused and more specific," said board members, but Rodiek persisted.

"By broadcasting the aims and scopes to a larger audience, we have received favorable responses from scientists of every country," he said. "By talking about the relationship between ecology and environmental conditions and relating it to planning and design, that helps us appeal to a larger audience.

"Global warming is not a specific problem," he said. "It’s a universal problem and the business of planning and design relating to science is a universal condition that we must start paying attention to."

Rodiek said his broad-based approach came from his Ph.D. advisor, Dr. Carl Carozzi, "who’s been a huge help," said Rodiek. "He taught us to be a Renaissance scientist and to stop this nonsense thinking that if you know more and more about less and less you’re going to be more important."

Landscape and Urban Planning, a scholarly journal headquartered at Texas A&M, is based on the premise that research linked to practical applications can improve the human-made landscape. It emphasizes ecological understanding and a multi-disciplinary approach to analysis, planning and design. The journal attempts to draw attention to the interrelated nature of problems posed by nature and human use of land.

Survey names Regan, Murphy among nation’s ‘25 Most Admired Educators’

Michael Murphy

The College of Architecture recently received a grant from the Texas Water Resources Institute to conduct a simulation study of storm water patterns in the ecologically planned Village of Grogan’s Mill in The Woodlands, Texas. "This will aid in research and teaching the ecological planning approach of The Woodlands and will provide insights into the impacts of planning methods and development patterns on storm water quantity and quality," said Yang in his research proposal.

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FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

New programs, endowments advancing LAUP initiatives

By FORSTER NUDUBISI
Department Head
Landscape Architecture & Urban Planning

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2007-08 academic year. In past issues of Perspectives, I’ve addressed our strategic planning initiatives. This time, I will update you on the progress in these initiatives and elaborate on the new ones in progress.

We are now in the first year of implementing new curricula for each of the departmental programs. We have embarked on aggressive recruitment efforts to attract excellent students and are beginning to see results. Both the overall quality and number of students entering all our programs has increased significantly. In May 2007, we had approximately 330 full-time students enrolled in the department, the largest number of students we have ever had. This number will increase in the future as we meet enrollment targets and implement new academic programs.

Over the past two years, department faculty have worked intensely on developing a new undergraduate degree, the Bachelor of Science in Urban Planning (BS-URS). I am pleased to report that this degree was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in May 2007. The BS-URS degree program equips students to deal effectively with the opportunities and challenges inherent in the development, growth and culture of neighborhoods, communities and challenges inherent in the development, growth and cultural of neighborhoods, communities and challenges inherent in the development, growth and culture of neighborhoods, communities and challenges inherent in the development, growth and culture of neighborhoods, communities, cities, and regions, and the global community.

We have 25 students enrolled in the program. Our target is to enroll 50 students per year. We will graduate our first cohort of students in 2008. At that time, the program will be managed by a coordinator, Dr. Eric Dumbaugh, who will also serve as program coordinator. With this new degree, the department now offers six degrees programs: Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Bachelor of Science in Urban and Regional Science, Master of Landscape Architecture, Master of Urban Planning, and Master of Science in Urban and Regional Science.

The BS-URS degree also complements the department’s minor in urban planning, which has been offered since 2003. The mingling of students from both graduate and undergraduate, enriches students’ multidisciplinary perspectives. To learn more about the BS-URS program please read the article on Page 1 of this publication or visit the department website at http://archone.tamu.edu/laup/.

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An “awful lot of this work has been about sustainability standards.”

What is particularly noteworthy is that our faculty has been effective in integrating their research findings into their teaching and, therefore, our students benefit greatly from the latest and latest knowledge and information. We are also engaged in numerous service-learning initiatives that enable our faculty and students to make a significant difference in the quality of lives of Texas communities. These initiatives are coordinated through the department’s Partnership for Community Outreach Unit.

As mentioned in my last note, great universities immerse our students in the quality of their academic programs, curricula, faculty and students, as well as in building effective partnerships with internal and external constituencies. I am pleased to report we are making progress through the implementation of our strategic and curriculum initiatives and priorities. The continued progress in moving our programs to the next level requires the collective support of our students, faculty, and staff, as well as supportive internal and external constituencies, including our advisory board members and former students. I express my gratitude for your collective support.

Dr. Katherine F. Turnbull Scholarship

Jesus Hinojosa Endowed Urban Planning Scholarship

Colonel James E. Ray ’63 Endowed Scholarship

Jun Eun Kang

Ding Wang

Wolfgang Roeseler Scholarship

Eric Bardenhagen

David Pugh Scholarship

Irene (Nicole) Adair

Robert R. & Florence H. White Endowed Scholarship

Dr. Katherine F. Turnbull Scholarship

The following students received scholarships at the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning’s Spring 2007 Awards Banquet.

Gene Schrirkel Jr. ’50 Endowed Scholarship

Jesus Hinojosa Endowed Urban Planning Scholarship

Jeremy Greenhaw, Tasha Davis and Xun Sun

Jun Eun Kang

Robert F. & Florence H. White Endowed Scholarship

Ding Wang

Landscape Architecture

David Pugh Scholarship

Jaan Maldonado and Buck Newsom

Mary Keilers

ASLA Texas Chapter Maurice Phillips Scholarship

Jun Eun Kang

Antonio F. Sarabando Jr. ’56 Spirit of Place Award

Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association

Lisa McCleary

TBG Partners/Robert Castro Memorial Scholarship

Jun Huang

Irene (Nicole) Adair

Nathaniel Fisher

Dr. Katherine F. Turnbull Scholarship

Katherine F. Turnbull Scholarship

Mary Keilers

Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association

Irene (Nicole) Adair

Center for Heritage Conservation Fellows Scholarship

Jun Huang

Michael D. Murphy Endowed Scholarship

Michelle Auenert and Sara Smith

Ding Wang

Mary Keilers

State of Texas Aggie Scholarship

Jun Huang

Robert F. & Florence H. White Endowed Scholarship

Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association

Irene (Nicole) Adair

Jun Huang

Irene (Nicole) Adair

Michael D. Murphy Endowed Scholarship

Jun Huang

Ding Wang

Center for Heritage Conservation Fellows Scholarship

Michelle Auenert and Sara Smith

Jun Huang

Ding Wang

Students collaborate in landscape architecture ch...
Master of Urban Planning program celebrates 40th anniversary

About 50 students, faculty, former students and friends of the Texas A&M University Master of Urban Planning program gathered in October 2007 to celebrate the program’s 40th birthday during the American Planning Association Texas Chapter conference in Corpus Christi. Celebrities signed a sheet of birthday paper, enjoyed birthday cake and balloons, and, of course, enjoyed the birthday festivities in a spontaneous chorus of “Happy Birthday to You!”

“The turnout was great,” said Elise Bright (DBE ’80), MUP program coordinator. “It’s clear that although we are 40, we’re not over the hill!”

The MUP program at Texas A&M University is one of the oldest of its kind in the nation. Over the years, it has produced many well known and notable alumni, among them many memorable professors as Don Sweeney, Chuy Hill!”

In other program news, the student-designed Cypress Creek Hike and Bike Trail was dedicated in Austin, Texas. Building the trail was the design project for the fall 2007 urban design studio, which is taught by Associate Professor Matthew Norman. The trail and one of its trail head parks were constructed by 200 volunteers over the summer of 2007. To learn more about this project, read the full story on Page 8.

In memoriam

Remembering Benjamin Joseph Lednicky, Jr., ’62

“Ben will be missed by those who knew him and will remain a model of the kind of service that has made Texas A&M the institution it is today.”

Ben Johnson Roping and Cutting (for Cys- tibrosis), Red Adair-Jackie Sherrill Charity Golf Tournament, Theatre Under the Stars, Al- ley Theatre, Pin Oak Charity Horse Show, and Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, for which he donated a large gift in 2001. He was particularly proud of winning the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo World Champion barque contest in 1978 as a member of the Heritage Hill Ranch and Cattle Co.

Ben was well known for those who knew him and will remain a model of the kind of service that has made Texas A&M the institution it is today. His family suggests that memorials be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, TX, and the Texas A&M University Foundation, PO Box 77496, attn: Ben Lednicky Scholarship Fund, for details.

The department is planning to further de- velop the BS-URS offering, he adds, by seeking approval of five of our faculty members for one degree offering. If approved, this will allow mo- tivated BS-URS students to continue directly to graduate school in the Master of Science in Land Development professional de- gree programs, and complete their graduate studies in a shortened amount of time.

State approval of the new BS-URS degree at Texas A&M culminated a two-year effort spear- headed by the Master of Urban Planning depart- ment and Urban Planning faculty committee that included Sherry Barnes, associate professor and founding advisor for the Master of Urban Planning, and Jeremy Spray, assistant professor.

Program director Donald Sweeney said 30 students have already signed up as BS-URS majors and about 60 students are minoring in the field. Plans call for adding 50 new majors each year.

For additional insight or curriculum details on the BS-URS degree program, visit the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning website at http://archeone.tamu.edu/laup/.
1978 landscape grad to head Association of Former Students

Shelley E. Potter of Dallas, a summa cum laude graduate who earned a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from Texas A&M University in 1978, is currently serving as president-elect of the Association of Former Students of Texas A&M University.

She, and the other new members of the organization's board of directors, were elected at the fall Leadership Council meeting.

Potter is a landscape architect in association with Jeff Potter Architects. She is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects and has served on numerous civic boards, including the Longview Planning & Zoning Commission and Smart Growth Task Force.

The Association of Former Students, established in 1879, is the official alumni organization of Texas A&M University. To learn more, visit www.AggieNetwork.com.

Seeking the best & brightest

At the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning’s 2008 Spring Career Fair, held Feb. 21 at the Langford Architecture Center, a total of 43 firms gathered to vie for the best and brightest members of the department’s 2008 graduating class. To learn how your firm can participate in these popular recruiting venues, contact the department at 979.845.1019.