The 2013 academic year was good to the RCPL family. The division received a four year term for reaccreditation from the Planning Accreditation Board. The program’s focus over the next few years will be on the implementation of its strategic plan, the recruitment of new students and faculty, and the production and dissemination of scholarship.

Our program is comprised of 27 students from the US and abroad and we seek to grow our program to 40 students by 2016. While the majority of our students hail from the State of Oklahoma, we have a number of remarkable international students from: China, Korea, Iran, Russia, Germany, and El Salvador.

Our alumni have been giving back in meaningful ways. The RCPL Board of Visitors, in an initiative led by Jim Duncan (‘63), will be hosting an all alumni reunion on Oct. 4, 2014 to honor Professor Lee Rogers. We hope you will join us for this event. It will be an important opportunity to reconnect with one another and to celebrate Professor Rogers’ 90th birthday.

RCPL will host the 2014 OKAPA conference on campus on Oct. 2 and 3 of this year. We will issue a call for session submissions in March so please be on the lookout for future announcements. Among other topics, we will be celebrating the resiliency of Oklahoma communities in the wake of severe weather. Additionally, land use law expert John Nolon has accepted our invitation to speak about the legal aspects of hydrofracturing.

We hope you will come home to OU this year and be a part of some of the exciting events we have planned.

Regional and City Planning ended 2013 on a high note thanks to Alumni John F. (Jack) Crowley. Wanting to give back to his alma mater, Crowley established a $25,000 endowment for the distribution of annual scholarship to an RCPL Student. Thanks to Crowley’s generosity, RCPL now has three endowed scholarships: Logan, Founders, and now Crowley. Crowley’s story is a great reminder of how talented individuals come to planning and then go on to do amazing things.

Crowley came to the University of Oklahoma in 1969 after his earlier college studies in architecture at the University of Detroit were interrupted by the military draft in 1965. He opted for studies in Arabic with the National Defense Language Institute and later was commissioned as a Lieutenant in Field Artillery.
Exiting the army from Ft. Sill in 1969 he asked, “Where the heck is the nearest university where I can finish my education?” He was told that it was where students in bright red pants chased a covered wagon in a large stadium. He completed his bachelor’s degree in History/Art History in 1970 and in 1973 completed a Master of Regional and City Planning while interning for the Lawton Urban Renewal Authority. Crowley went on to a Ph.D. in Urban Geography while serving as the Planning Director for Seminole, Okla. All his degrees were completed at OU while conducting his dissertation research in urban storm water management. Crowley served as Chief Planner for Oklahoma State Parks and was an Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Georgia. He graduated with his Ph.D. in 1977.

Crowley returned to Oklahoma as Executive Director of the Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission in 1978. He merged the regional agency with the area’s Council of Government (INCOG) in 1980 and moved on to become a corporate executive in commercial real estate development with The Williams Companies. During the next several years, his team developed more than $2 billion in large downtown mixed use redevelopment projects in Tulsa, Kansas City, Denver, San Antonio and Charlotte. In 1987 he founded Urbantech Inc., a planning and development corporation, and was appointed Director of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) by Governor David Walters in 1993. In 1996, Crowley left Oklahoma to become Dean of the College of Environment and Design at the University of Georgia where he served for ten years. After completing a master plan for Tulsa’s downtown during a one-and-one-half year sabbatical, he returned to Georgia to start a new studio-based professional graduate degree program in Environmental Planning and Design (MEPD). Crowley continues to teach and oversee the graduate program while also consulting nationally and internationally on planning and development.

He serves on the Board of Directors as Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee for Escuela Agricola Panamericana (Zamorano University) in Honduras and has been elected to the College of Fellows in both the professions of planning (FAICP) and landscape architecture (FASLA). Combined, Jack and Ann Crowley, his wife of 43 years, hold five degrees and have one graduate certification from the University of Oklahoma.

183 days in the United States
by Anna Siprikova (RCPL ’15)

This narrative was prepared by Anna, a Fulbright scholar who joined us in the fall of 2013. She spent the winter break travelling west by car. These are her reflections.

The afternoon ride from the airport is exhausting, reminding me that I landed in the eighth largest city in the US by land area. The landscape outside the taxi windows has nothing in common with what I was expecting from online maps. The driver is trying to find a way to my new home, fighting the sameness of number-named streets.

Getting used to new navigation takes a while, and rarely found people in the big avenues, parks, yards and public spaces are surprised to see someone walking. I came from the big and hectic northernmost megacity of Moscow.
With a population of 11.5 million people, Moscow accounts for 10% of Russian employment, 22% of its GDP and 65% of all foreign investment.

Having these numbers in mind, the land area is roughly the same as the urban area of the city of Oklahoma City (390 sq. mi and 410 sq. mi accordingly). Low density contradicts my perception of a city as an urban environment, and downtown areas become my fortress surrounded by mysterious islands of private dwellings.

I've spent five months walking and biking around Norman, absorbing southern hospitality and culture of small talk. Christmas break allowed me to explore five more different states: Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California and Nevada. As a city planner, I am uncovering small, yet thriving, towns like Marfa, Texas; Marathon, Texas; Silver City, N.M. and their antipodes – ghost towns – Terlingua, Texas; Calico, Calif. and etc. These cities tell stories: an old man with a loyal dog, a smile from a stranger buying his morning coffee, an abandoned and rusty bike, and sharp air.

Cut by elevated highways, one is compelled to discover most cities by taking a detour and interacting with locals. If you continue to drive non-stop there is a feeling of airplane voyage – constant speed and endless sky. As time zones change, so do the people: from entrepreneurial driven Texans to hospitable (despite sprawling cacti) Arizonans, or surprisingly taciturn Californians. My observation of different lifestyles, food preferences and attitudes towards transportation opens another city, the city’s true face and possibilities. There is nothing like a traditional American layer cake — high, light, tender, and topped with a yummy frosting. There is nothing like the United States — diverse, welcoming, accessible, and topped with breathtaking nature.

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**Student Philanthropy**

by Kristen Dikeman, RCPL Student and Vice President of the Student Planning Association

On Monday, Dec. 16, five RCPL students represented the OU Student Planning Association at the Salvation Army’s Angel Tree Distribution Center, located in the former Crossroads Mall in Oklahoma City. Danielle Barker, Elham Daha, Kristen Dikeman, Justin Henry, and Ying Li spent the morning assembling packages of donated toys, clothes, and toiletries for families with children under the age of eighteen months.

In 2013, the Angel Tree program served 2,000 Central Oklahoman families in need and SPA is proud to have been able to participate in such a deserving cause.
As planners, we think a lot about parking spaces. We have too many. We have too few. The ones we have are in the wrong places. This is a common issue worldwide and inspired the international celebration of Parking Day.

OU students, led by James Eldridge (RCPL ’14) went to Oklahoma City to work with neighborhood groups to design, construct, and install temporary parklets in metered parking spots in celebration of this event on Sep. 20. Many of them had so much fun doing this that they went back to talk with passersby. RCPL hopes to make this an annual event with Oklahoma City partners.

RCPL Faculty Search Underway

RCPL has been blessed with the authorization to hire an assistant or associate professor. The search committee is comprised of Dr. Dawn Jourdan (RCPL-chair), Dr. John Harris (RCPL), Dr. Meghan Wieters (RCPL), Dr. Guogiang Shen (RCPL), Dr. Leehu Loon (LA), Dr. Laurel Smith (Geography), Justin Henry (SPA President), and Kristen Dikeman (SPA Vice-President). By mid-January, the search committee had received more than 70 applications for the position.

The division is searching for a candidate that can teach classes in the program’s core curriculum as well as adding to the division’s offerings in the area of physical planning, including urban design, transportation, environmental planning or GIS. We hope to find a new colleague who is grounded in both research and practice. Interviews will take place in early March. If all goes well, our new family member will join us at the start of the fall term. More to come!!!
The Fall 2013 Comprehensive Planning Studio was an exciting experience. Sixteen students including 10 Regional and City Planning and 6 Landscape Architecture students embraced two projects. The first project was working with the City of Guthrie, Okla., helping them to create a plan to make the city’s vision of becoming a prime regional event tourism destination a reality. Guthrie was chosen as one of the four North American “stopovers” for the Gentlemen of the Road Music Festival, which headlined Grammy winning group Mumford and Sons.

City leaders asked our students for recommendations on using this event as a spring board to attract additional tourism opportunities. Our students were on-hand during the weekend-long event in September conducting surveys of attendees’ experiences at the event and desires for future events in Guthrie. Following the event, the students created a tourism development document that: 1) Created a marketing profile of potential attendees of future events from around the region; 2) Generated a “lessons learned list” based on interviews with businesses, citizens, and city staff in order to make future events just as or more successful; 3) Analyzed climatological data combined with information on the city’s built form to assess best options for timing and location of future venues; 4) Made recommendations for temporary urban design features for future events that complement the historic nature of the city but also add amenities for street festivals; and 5) Created design recommendations for a multipurpose stage design to replace a city-owned parking lot that would also add a “town square” feeling in the city.

The students were able to present their work to the city and received an official Mayoral Commendation for their work.

The second project involved working with the Oklahoma City Planning Department and Oklahoma City University as joint clients. Just as with the Guthrie project, this was a unique opportunity for our students. The project was an “area study” of OCU at several scales including the design of several spaces on campus that serve as OCU’s public face, the interrelationship between OCU and the surrounding neighborhoods, and the place of OCU within the larger regional fabric.

Continued on page 6
The students detailed how the areas around the campus had developed and reinvigorated themselves over the last 100 years and made recommendations for how the university and city might partner on projects that would add to quality of life on campus as well as create opportunities in the neighborhoods surrounding the campus. These included design recommendations for the restoration of urban wildlife habitats on campus, the establishment of an urban trail that connected campus to several local parks, and the initiation of an area visioning process that engaged the university and its closest neighbors among others. While the students were prevented from presenting their work by ice storms on the scheduled date, their work was received at a joint meeting between OCU and city planners who commended the students on their professional work.

Friends of the Program Recognized

RCPL recognized two of its valued friends at the College of Architecture Scholarship and Awards Banquet in September. Attorney Deborah Rosenthal (RCPL ’77) was recognized as an outstanding alumna. Rosenthal is a well-known land use attorney for Shepherd Mullin in Costa Mesa, Calif. She serves on the Regional and City Planning Division Board of Visitors and is currently serving as the vice-chair. Beyond her illustrious career, Rosenthal was selected for this award by RCPL and the college for her recent guidance in the program’s reaccreditation by the Planning Accreditation Board. She is a true friend to the program.

Fernando Costa, Assistant City Manager for the City of Fort Worth, received an award for being an outstanding adjunct. Costa serves as the RCPL program’s Professor of Practice. He teaches courses in state and local finance and public management. He is one of the program’s most popular instructors and travels by train from Fort Worth to Norman several Saturday’s every semester to conduct day long course sessions. Given his national status in the planning community, Costa attracts some of the region’s finest experts to his classroom. His students benefit from his connections and his grounding in both planning and public administration.

We are so fortunate to have Deborah Rosenthal and Fernando Costa as members of the RCPL family!

Greetings from the Board of Visitors

by Kim Cooper-Hart (RCPL ’02), Chair of the RCPL Board of Visitors

With warm applause for RCPL’s accomplishments to date in this academic year, we are pleased to announce the formation of the 2013-2014 Regional and City Planning Division Board of Visitors. During the last several years, colleges and divisions at OU, including RCPL, have established boards of visitors (BOVs) for their respective academic areas.

As recommending and advisory bodies, these BOVs include individuals of distinction from the university’s alumni and relevant areas of practice. The RCPL BOV adopted its mission and bylaws in September 2013 for the purpose of assisting the RCPL director with strategic initiatives identified in the division’s strategic plan and division fundraising efforts. This new structure brings real world experience and diverse points of view to the program’s strategies and offers its members a rewarding experience in service. A few things we started this year include:

- Mentoring Program: BOV members paired with RCPL students
- Annual membership dues to assist the RCPL director with programs and projects
- Continuous programs for life-long learning through improved collaborations between the APA Oklahoma Chapter, RCPL faculty and student body, and the profession.

On behalf of the RCPL BOV, I invite our RCPL alumni to read the RCPL Strategic Plan and participate. It is available on the Division’s website at rcpl.ou.edu. Please call on me or Dr. Jourdan anytime to learn more about ways you can help make a difference at kim.cooper@okc.gov or (405) 297-2900.