



Students in the University of Iowa Urban and Regional Planning Community Development in the Upper Midwest class visited with 4-6 graders at Delwood Elementary School in Delmar, Iowa to discuss an upcoming project for the community. UI and Delwood students will, through videos and bookmaking activities, collaborate to gather stories from Delmar residents that ultimately help build a vision for the community's future.

## IISC Update

Exciting work continues on the year-long partnership designed to support local community development across East Central Iowa and to promote engaged learning experiences for more than 50 University of Iowa students. With one semester complete, students have benefitted from the partnership between ECIA and the UI's Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC) by learning from real-world experiences while also helping communities move projects forward.

Projects completed in the first semester included a downtown revitalization study for the City of Lost Nation and cataloging and communications plans for The Edgewood Museum in Edgewood, Iowa.

Year-long projects continuing in the spring semester include development of a regional Brownfields toolkit, revamping the Prosperity Eastern Iowa's Petal Project business certification program, and branding and marketing alternatives for the City of Maquoketa.

Projects set to begin with the start of the semester include engineering projects for the communities of Maquoketa, Lake Delhi, and Preston, as well as a Delmar community development project. IISC estimates that UI students and faculty from 10 areas of study will have collectively contributed more than 10,000 hours of work to the region by the end of the partnership in May 2017.

The partnership with IISC is the result of a successful application by ECIA to work with the program for the 2016-17 academic year.

## American Trust Donates to SNAP



Amanda Hohmann, ECIA Employment & Training Specialist, receiving donations from American Trust officials.

Thank you to American Trust for their recent donation to the East Central Development Corporation's Special Needs Assistance Program (SNAP). The bank made two donations; \$500 to be used for support to program participants with day to day necessities (household

products, food, gas, money, bus tickets, etc.) and, \$2,500 for homeless assistance (for those who are homeless and need one time assistance and to aid those who may be on the verge of becoming homeless). Specifically, these funds will go towards funding a security and/or utility deposit for an apartment and toward monthly rent for a maximum of two months.

American Trust is always looking for ways to give back to the community and provide support to programs offered that benefit those within the community who are in the most need. Thank you, American Trust, for your donations to these critical services!

## Schneider Selected for ESWG

Mark Schneider, ECIA Community Development and Public Services Director, was recently selected for the 2017 External Stakeholder Working Group (ESWG) by the FEMA, Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) team. Schneider will serve as a Local / Regional Representative. FEMA received over 120 applications from many qualified State, Territory, Tribe, and Local level hazard mitigation stakeholders. The ESWG reflects a diverse membership with representatives from communities across the country with a broad range of hazard risk profiles, demography (e.g. rural to urban), and jurisdiction makeup (e.g. multi- or single-jurisdiction units). The 2017 ESWG is ready to begin:

- Opening the channels of communication between federal and state, territorial, Indian tribal, and local mitigation staff
- Gathering insight into mitigation and/or HMA program issues from the state, territory, Indian tribe, or local perspective
- Increasing transparency in HMA goals, program priorities, and policy development
- Helping HMA provide a consistent, predictable experience for external stakeholders, and
- Delving more deeply into issues identified during the HMA Café at the 2016 HMA Workshop

Please submit any questions or requests for information to [fema-hma-grants-policy@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-hma-grants-policy@fema.dhs.gov).

## Employee News



ECIA welcomes back Nicole Turpin who accepted the position of Project Manager. In a partnership with the University of Iowa, she will lead local efforts to manage and coordinate the IISC (Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities) projects. IISC promotes engaged learning experiences in community development for University of Iowa Urban and Regional Planning graduate students. Current community projects include downtown revitalization studies, communication plans, program evaluations, and engineering. She will also administer the EPA's Brownfields Coalition Assessment grant throughout the region. Turpin previously worked for ECIA in Community Development.



Additionally, Sean O'Malley has accepted the position of Rehab Specialist-Building Code Inspector. His responsibilities include technical and advisory work in federal and state grant programs working with city and county governments, owners, housing contractors, inspectors, housing tenants and the general public. He will also perform inspections to assure that buildings constructed in the City requesting services are in compliance with the adopted City building codes, laws and ordinances. He previously was Maintenance Manager at ECIA/EIRHA/EIRHC.

## New Website



The Grant Wood Mississippi River Region (GWMRR) recently launched an interactive website ([www.gwloop.com](http://www.gwloop.com)) highlighting arts, cultural, and recreation. Thanks to a \$20,000 grant from the Regional Planning Affiliation 8 and a combined contribution of \$10,000 from the GWMRR region of Dubuque, Jones, and Jackson Counties including partnering Counties, Clinton and Delaware, the Iowa Tourism Council, Jackson County Tourism, Jones County Tourism and the Dubuque Conventions and Visitor's Bureau, the website went live in January.

The Parks to People pilot project is a State initiative to create a regional arts, cultural and recreational destination that utilizes the State of Iowa's investment of \$1.9 million to leverage private investment. Over the last year, GWMRR stakeholders developed a 2-year plan to enhance, promote and sustain the region's assets. The plan outlines up to \$21 million of enhancements for the region's parks, recreation and natural spaces.

The new website will allow users from the region, as well as tourists to the area, to build personal itineraries based on their interests. Whether planning a day trip with the family, or a weekend of camping and fishing, this website will highlight the great recreation, arts, and cultural offerings the Grant Wood Mississippi Region has to offer.



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