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Faculty Participation Through The Citizens League

The role and tradition of higher education in Minnesota has been significant in strengthening and perpetuating a unique environment for public decision-making in Minnesota. Public education has always been considered to be an important contributor to the welfare of the state, both in terms of human enrichment and community betterment. The University of Minnesota, was from the beginning THE University — where public funds were invested to develop a high level of excellence to serve the state. Located in the center of the major metropolitan area and within 20 miles of half of the state's population, the University has a distinct opportunity — and responsibility — for its faculty and students to participate in community affairs and to utilize the urban area as an enriching resource and learning laboratory. These opportunities and traditions have affected the private colleges and public junior colleges in the metropolitan area as well.

One of the most effective users of faculty energy has been the Citizens League, now entering its twentieth year

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of existence. During that time it has become the most significant private organization involved in public affairs in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. It was established in 1952, as an educational non-profit organization primarily by Minneapolis city residents who were concerned with the problems of Minneapolis city government. Its interests and its membership broadened to include all of Hennepin County in the late 1950's and expanded to a 7-county metropolitan-wide base since 1961. The Citizens League is unique nationally — both in the

quality of its citizen involvement and in its effectiveness in dealing with issues of public concern. In recent years, these issues have included sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, housing, public open space, a metropolitan zoo, health care, criminal justice, mass transportation, highway construction, airports, public finance, and governmental reorganization.

The Citizens League is governed by a board of 36 directors, 24 of whom are elected by the membership, and twelve who are appointed by the board. There are about 3500 individual members who each pay ten dollars a year to belong — many of whom also contribute to the

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A NEW BREED of Planners

Many of the actions of government in urban planning, renewal and rehabilitation have long been regarded by citizens of the inner city as capricious, arbitrary, demeaning and destructive. These strong reactions have stemmed, in large part, from the lack of genuine resident participation in the planning and renewal process, from an overemphasis on the physical aspects of urban development, and from the marked lack of minority group, low income and resident representation on the staffs of developmental agencies.

One attempt to alleviate this crisis of the urban community is to create a new staffing structure, drawn from the resident population, who will relate the special needs and feelings of resident groups to the decision-making process in planning agencies. The expectation is that through the development of competent neighborhood people, formally educated in the field of urban studies, and well-schooled in city living, more thoughtful — and acceptable — programs might evolve.

In addition to the prime goal of bringing neighborhood residents into the decision-making process in planning, other primary benefits are expected to accrue:

- the expansion of meaningful career opportunities in planning and community development for persons who can qualify themselves through a work and study program.
- the development of leadership capital at all levels in the neighborhoods in our inner cities.
- the validation of the principle of work/study as a means to meet manpower needs in planning and community development.

To realize these goals, the University of Minnesota, through its Office of Career Development in CURA, and with the State Planning Agency as prime sponsor, applied for two grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. These programs became operational. NEW BREED (Cont'd on page 3)

Teachers Study Urban Problems

The Education Committee of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Institute of Planners has sponsored a series of seminars for junior and senior high school teachers in the Twin Cities — in the Fall of 1969 and again during the Fall of 1970. About 30 teachers were enrolled each year — some receiving college credit from their school district. The purpose of the seminars has been to review current urban problems and provide the teachers with some general background information and materials for classroom use. It was hoped that in this way urban issues could be integrated into the curriculum by the teachers and translated into specific projects effectively adapted to the needs of the students.

The Fall 1970 seminars were held on consecutive Thursday afternoons from 4 to 6 p.m. — plus a four hour field trip held on the first Saturday. Those participating as seminar discussion leaders included John Borchert, Neil Gustafson, Barbara Lukermann, Gerald Mangle, Howard Dahlgren, James Dallas, Robert Einsweiler, Gunnar Isberg, Richard Heath, and Warner Shippee. The subject matter included:

- **Introduction:** process of urbanization, impact of technology and communication, function of cities, settlement patterns, social, economic and physical characteristics — with special reference to the Twin Cities Metropolitan area.
- **Field Trip:** overview of the Twin Cities urban environment including housing, transportation, business and industry, cultural features, parks, schools, public buildings and physical characteristics.
- **Housing and Redevelopment:** current housing pressures, construction costs, land costs, financing, alternatives; housing deterioration, replacement and maintenance; neighborhood evolution; renewal and rehabilitation, code enforcement, model cities; citizen participation.
- **Transportation:** historical perspectives on transportation in the Twin Cities area, the need and the means to move people and goods, the role

of transportation in shaping the location and density of urban development, planning for future needs in the Twin Cities area.

- **Environmental Management:** urban society and our environment; solid, liquid and gaseous wastes; the experimental city idea; conservation and eco-planning with particular emphasis on the Twin Cities area.
- **Second Major Airport:** case study of current controversy over location of a second major airport for the Twin Cities area, trends in airport usage, problems with present location, relationship of existing metro airports to a new facility, consideration of alternative sites for new facility, the decision-making processes involved.
- **Problem Solving:** issues we face — and possible approaches; confronting the changing needs of an urban-

izing society; what is planning? who plans, makes decisions? demands for participation — how do we account for it and accommodate it? the role of government, need for institutional reorganization, future patterns of urban living . . .

Written comments of participating teachers were requested at the last session — and the reaction of most was highly favorable. As a result of national publicity, an interest has been shown in initiating similar programs in other parts of the country.

The MAIP Education Committee hopes to conduct the seminar again this Fall, making it available to all interested secondary teachers — public and private — in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Teachers interested in participating in the seminars may call the CURA office at 373-7833 for more information.

How To Make An Advocate

In 1966 the Center for Urban Encounter, commonly known as CUE, was founded by the Greater Urban Parish of the Twin Cities, which now includes:

American Baptist Convention
Disciples of Christ (Christian Churches)
Episcopal Church
United Presbyterian Church
United Church of Christ
American Lutheran Church
Lutheran Church in America
United Methodist Church
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis

CUE's purpose remains twofold: to expose people to and equip them for meaningful involvement in the metropolitan issues of our day in order to help them recapture a sense of democratic participation in the actions for social change which are proliferating around us.

Initially CUE met this purpose by concentrating on education. Through volunteer involvement in existing organizations

and discussions with a variety of community resource persons — including Lillian Anthony, John Borchert, Jack Flagler, Tom Walz, Joe Bash, Paul Gilje, Neil Gustafson, Matt Eubanks, Clyde Bellecourt — clergy and laymen have broadened their understanding of metropolitan issues and strategies for change. William Grace serves as Executive Director of CUE, Frederick W. Smith is Associate Director.

Though CUE has retained its Metropolitan Series, other organizations are increasingly offering urban education experiences. Urban problems are continuously being examined in the mass media. CUE participants now seldom ask "What are the problems?" and "What can I do?". We are inundated with problems and possible solutions: need for low-income housing, mass transit, quality education; the unemployment caused by fewer defense contracts; pollution; lack of recreational facilities. It's becoming clearer, however, that for the average citizen these are not "technological" or

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tional in January of 1970. *Title VIII: Community Development – Training Grant and Section 701: Special Projects – Minorities in Planning and Related Urban Professions* are provisions of the Housing Act revisions of 1968. These grants furnish the funds for some 40 disadvantaged and minority students to participate in the Careers in Community Development and Urban Planning (CUP) Program.

The Title VIII grant was designed to include those people already working in a variety of urban agencies, particularly the newly organized anti-poverty efforts, who felt the need to improve their skills in order to make a more significant contribution to program planning and decision making in their own communities. The grant provides tuition, fees and book monies and a small travel allowance. The employing agency makes the important contribution of released time for study. The CUP staff works closely with the enrollee's agency supervisor and with a representative from General College (Len Simutis, Ph.D. candidate in Urban Planning) to devise the best model for a work/study project that will satisfy the academic requirements of the General College for accredited work experience,

while at the same time adding a significant dimension to the education of the student and the program of the agency in which he works.

The agencies participating in the Title VIII program are:

- Minneapolis Public Library
- Ramsey County OEO
- Hennepin County OEO
- Minneapolis Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- St. Paul Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- 3M University Ave. Training Center
- Minnesota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Minneapolis Model Cities
- Minneapolis Pilot City
- St. Paul Urban League
- Inner City Youth League
- TCOIC
- University of Minnesota

For the 701 grant the CUP staff recruited minority students who had already demonstrated an interest in the field of social planning and urban affairs, and were – for a variety of reasons – unable to pursue the credential they required. There was a concerted effort to recruit Indian students, because of the demonstrated need for leadership among

the Indian groups gathering in increasing numbers in the Twin City area.

The 701 enrollees are employed in the following agencies, which agreed to take them on as half-time employees in para-professional capacities:

- Minneapolis City Planning Department
- St. Paul HRA
- Metropolitan Council
- Ramsey County OEO
- Minneapolis City Coordinator's Office
- University of Minnesota – Upward Bound Program, Careers in Urban Planning Program
- Minnesota Corrections Service
- Minnesota Department of Human Rights
- Oxford Playground (St. Paul)

Two of the enrollees are graduate students in the School of Social Work and are Administrative Aides in training on the CUP staff. There are two other graduate students – one in Law and one in the school of Public Affairs.

What are the hazards of doing a program for the disadvantaged? They are legion. The insufficiency of funding resources is the foremost difficulty, and it pervades many facets of program planning and operation. Poor people cannot participate in a program which provides monies only for education. They need money on which to live, and to support their families. There are many futures riding on what a program can offer the head of a household.

The hunt for a "package of funding" to provide stipends, educational costs and supportive services is thwarted by many roadblocks. Among these are the procedural difficulties, such as mutually exclusive program guidelines between government agencies.

Secondly, there is the failure of the program designers and the Congress "to sweeten" an education and training program sufficiently so that participating agencies could be reimbursed for the time the trainee spends away from the agency. Very few agencies can afford to release an employee to attend the University when they must pay that employee for full-time work effort.

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"economic" problems as many would have us believe. For the citizen they are political problems. The question now is, "Are we willing to do what's necessary?" Are we willing to regain control of our lives and the life of the city? Are we willing to use and expand our political power as citizens to counteract the interests of the individuals and organizations that are benefitting from the way things are now or are we content to keep the status quo? As one means of equipping people to effect change – to indeed make them willing *and* able "to do what's necessary" – CUE has expanded its program to include training in community organizing and developing of joint strategies among the churches and with secular agencies.

Participants in and results of this training have varied enormously. Trainees have included members of the Catholic Interracial Council, sisters of the Order of St. Joseph, staff of the Eastside Neighborhood Services, American Baptist Clergy,

churches and community groups in the north Lake Minnetonka area. One staff member of CUE is now training student organizers from Gustavus Adolphus, Hamline, Macalester, the University of Minnesota. Participants have initiated changes in their local parishes and on their campuses, joined in the effort to get the Minneapolis City Council to "Ban the Can" (prohibit non-returnable bottles and cans), help build the Greater Metropolitan Federation and work with the Council for Corporate Review. Another chapter of the Federation is growing in St. Paul. A state-wide college student union is being developed.

These are admittedly only beginnings. Even so the question of evaluation is often pressed. But training, unlike more academic educational courses, offers its own evaluation in its results; that is, in the actions and organizations the trainees help put together. For more detailed information please contact the Center for Urban Encounter, 3338 University Avenue S.E., Minneapolis, 331-6210.

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organization with their time and committee work. Financial support comes principally from about 500 business firms, foundations, and organizations. The staff includes four research professionals and several clerical assistants. Its principal strategy is to undertake policy studies of major public issues arising in state and local government and to translate these issues into effective public action.

Among emerging metropolitan problems, the need for rebuilding local government has become the League's single most important concern. The Citizens League's analysis of the old Metropolitan Planning Commission in 1965, formed a basic case against the "representation of local units" arrangement in any area-wide agency. At the League's suggestion in 1966, the Metropolitan Transit Commission was formed. The League presented the first overall analysis of the solid-waste disposal problem and suggested approaches towards a solution. In its report on metropolitan sewage disposal problems in 1965, the League proposed that sewage charges to separate municipalities be based on the volumes of flow, rather than distance from the plant — this eventually became the basis for legislation. The Citizens League report in 1966, helped to rally support for an area-wide zoo to replace St. Paul's municipally supported and financially troubled Como Zoo. In 1967, the Citizens League helped to organize support for a new overall metropolitan agency which would pull together the problems that could not be solved by independent and competing units of government or a proliferation of independent special districts. The League participated directly and specifically in designing the new organization — which became the Metropolitan Council. More recently, the League has cooperated in the development of the RAFT project — a computerized record keeping system for evaluating public revenue. This grew from a concern for "fiscal disparities" — a recognition of the inequalities that exist among municipalities and school districts in their ability to provide public services.

The level of participation by college faculty in the Citizens League attest to the tradition of involvement. Frank Boddy, Associate Dean of the graduate school and Professor of Economics at the

University of Minnesota, is a board member and past president of the Citizens League and has helped with many of the studies of taxes and finance. James Hetland, Law Professor, is also a past president of the Citizens League and served as the first chairman of the Metropolitan Council. Charles Backstrom, Professor of Political Science at the University, was a board member before going on sabbatical leave and has made substantial contributions to the RAFT project. And there have been many others who have served on study committees — not only from the University, but from Augsburg, Macalester, Hamline, St. Thomas, and several state junior colleges including Metropolitan, Normandale, Anoka-Ramsey, and Inver Hills.

In other cases the League has sought University people as resources for its study committees, including: John Westerman, Director of University Hospitals (Health Care Committee), Hale Champion, Vice President for Planning and Operations (Higher Education Committee), Herbert Mohring, Professor of Economics (Transportation Committee), John Borchert, Director of CURA for various environment and planning committees. And there are dozens of other University faculty members who have been sought as consultants to various Citizens League committees and have spoken at the weekly Community Leadership Breakfasts, sponsored by the League. Feedback from the Citizens League to higher education has also been considerable. There have been committee chairmen and League staff members who have given seminars for the University Law School, the School of Journalism and the Political Science Department.

During the past five years there have been Twenty Citizens League committees — with four or five usually active at the same time. Committees usually work over a period that extends from a few months to nearly two years, each with about ten to thirty active members. Forty University of Minnesota faculty members have served as active members on seventeen of these twenty committees. The heaviest participation has been from the Law School and the Medical School — each with six faculty participants. Of the 40 faculty participants, nine served on more than one committee, two faculty members having each served on four committees over the past five years.

The League is able to draw creative leadership from business, the professions and education because those who participate on the Citizens League committees find that:

- their time spent on the committees is personally valuable
- committees have specific pragmatic objectives
- committee work is handled efficiently, so that participants feel their time is well spent, and
- committee recommendations usually have a measurable public impact

The result of this process is to create a cadre of informed, involved citizens who have an impact throughout the community. The Citizens League also serves as a kind of "farm system" for local government — a training ground for both short term and career politicians — and tends to attract well qualified younger people into public service. The League is a kind of do-it-yourself public affairs consultant which is at once knowledgeable, acceptable, politically astute — and effective. As a result, it is an organization that the community can reliably turn to when a new problem arises. Through this process, governmental functions are no longer the exclusive territory of the elected or appointed officials — they become truly public. This kind of involvement tends to lubricate the whole decision-making process, it keeps public officials on their toes and accountable — and it assures that good people are continually entering government. This helps the political parties to focus on real issues and not imaginary ones.

The Citizens League is not only part of the political tradition of Minnesota, but it helps to perpetuate that tradition and strengthen government from top to bottom, assuming an essential role as the principal metropolitan private non-private organization specializing in major public issues. The tradition is reflected in the fact that a significant number of Minnesotans hold influential positions of national leadership — a number that is far out of proportion to this state's population. Many people ask why? What is it here that seems to produce leadership?

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Urban Planning at North Hennepin J. C.

During the Fall of 1969, the North Hennepin State Junior College Community Service Program staff held several meetings with local elected and appointed officials, city administrators and public and consulting planners. These meetings were intended to identify areas in which the College could aid or improve the development and operations of the local communities. Through these meetings a strong need and desire was identified to improve the community planning and development process through educational programs aimed at two groups of participants. Elected and appointed officials expressed the need for their group to improve their knowledge of the basic community planning principles and processes. In terms of the day to day planning operation, government administrators and private planning consultants stressed the inefficient use of professional planners' time and skills as a consequence of the unavailability of trained and qualified paraprofessional personnel.

In response to the needs and problems which were identified, North Hennepin has initiated two urban planning educational programs. A continuing series of short seminars was initiated during January, 1970. To date, two general planning seminars and one housing seminar have been offered. A fourth seminar, "Introduction to Urban Planning", oriented primarily to newly appointed planning commissioners but open to all elected and appointed officials, was offered during February, 1971.

Paraprofessional level training will be the purpose of North Hennepin's second planning program. The two year, associate degree Urban Planning Technician Program is currently in its final stages of development. The Program will have its official opening at the beginning of the 1971-1972 academic year. In the interim, however, courses on basic planning subjects are currently being offered for persons in related fields, for those holding paraprofessional positions and for elected and appointed officials.

The Urban Planning Technician Program's primary goals will be the training

and development of individuals as paraprofessionals to assist professional urban planners in the execution of their responsibilities. However, the Program's participation has not been limited. A second goal of the Program will be to provide a basic understanding of urban problems and the planning process for those students who wish to pursue an advanced degree in urban studies or urban planning at a four year college or university. A final goal of the Program will be to improve the knowledge of those individuals (elected and appointed officials and staff) who are currently involved in community planning and development, but who lack the formal training and background.

The realization of the three goals is predicated upon the achievement of specific educational objectives. The Program's objectives have been defined as the development of (1) perception, analysis and understanding of the urban system and urban problems; (2) an understanding of the mission and role of urban planning; (3) an understanding of the planning process and its elements; (4) knowledge of the framework in which planning is conducted; (5) research and surveying capabilities; and (6) visual and graphic skills.

The Urban Planning Technician Program's curriculum has been formulated to give the student wide exposure to social science, basic science and mathematics courses. However, the Program's emphasis will be placed upon the physical, drafting-design courses and research oriented course work. The Architectural Technician Program and the Engineering Technician Program currently being offered at North Hennepin offer many courses which will be of direct benefit to the Planning Technician student. In addition, efforts are currently underway to establish a continuing practical problem or work exposure for students throughout their two year educational training.

The majority of courses required for an Associate Degree in the Urban Planning Technician Program will be held on a regular daytime schedule. However, those

courses which will be of benefit to both students and interested community leaders and citizens will meet during the evening. Evening classes will also hopefully facilitate greater coordination and participation with other educational programs such as the University of Minnesota's Careers in Urban Planning.

The eventual success or failure of North Hennepin's Urban Planning Technician Program is a two part responsibility. The College must provide the best and most practical training for the student. However, the employers, whether they be governmental agencies or private consultants must provide the jobs, challenges and rewards which make a paraprofessional position worth pursuing.

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The answer is a complicated one which finds its roots in the early traditions — and is perpetuated today by products of these traditions. "There is to begin with, a climate that is remarkably open to change," in the words of Ted Kolderie, Executive Director of the Citizens League. This climate seems to be the product of the earliest settlers and business entrepreneurs who came to Minnesota from New England and brought with them their traditions of the "town meeting." This structure was overlain by the early German and Scandinavian immigrants — who brought a concern for public education and an interest in civic involvement. Government thereby became the legitimate vehicle through which diverse segments of the community participated in resolving public issues. The result is that government is remarkably open, power is remarkably dispersed, and the citizens are generally well informed. The political parties are almost evenly balanced and their attention is focused on problem solving.

There is an obvious need throughout the country for mechanisms to involve the citizenry in public decision-making and to provide opportunities for the responsibilities of government to be assumed by laymen. But experiences of the faculty and Citizens League here in Minnesota may not be directly transferable to other parts of the country. They are members of a team and products of a unique political environment.

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And yet, how does a disadvantaged person ever regain his step on that career ladder, to acquire the skills and the credentials which afford him the opportunity for true personal development and upward, as well as lateral, mobility? This society provides one sure route "in and up" and that is education. But how available is it, really, for other than the affluent? How available in terms not only of money, but of time? To work half-time and also enroll in University coursework, while at the same time carrying family and community responsibilities, is an inordinate burden. To combine this overburdened schedule with problems of personal health, family ill health and tensions plus other family difficulties, is to expect super-human performance from the disadvantaged student.

It is no doubt true that federal programs such as CUP have provided the impetus for educational reform, for new routes to the credential, for a fresh look at different styles of competence. Under the auspices of CUP, a 3-sequence core of courses dealing with the urban scene was designed and tested with a mix of students from the program and from the general student body. A mix of faculty, from the academy and the agencies, was used to bring the students into touch not only with the theoreticians but with practitioners in planning. One sequence was taught entirely by a practising planner. Seminars and workshops required by the program, and used constructively by the staff in program development, elicited

from supervisors the skills needed by the paraprofessional. The staff compiled and edited a book of readings on *The Study of the City*, now being tested in urban studies coursework in CLA and GC, and the staff researcher is preparing a survey manual for use in teaching data skills. All of these are positive gains. These developments were assisted by 2 small grants, 1 from the Center for Curriculum Studies and 1 from the Graduate School. In addition the explorations and eagerness of the CUP students have hastened the adoption of urban studies programs in both of the aforementioned colleges, then there has been a contribution of value to the educational institution.

This brings us to the final measure of program success — and the most important one. That is the *role of the paraprofessional*. Are the CUP students given meaningful work assignments, are they being groomed to participate in the decision-making process of urban agencies? Are agencies in fact, with the help of the professional planning society (the AIP, which has met with CUP staff a number of times to assist in program development), constructing a ladder that will clearly define levels of tasks, with appropriate experience and education at each step?

The Urban Technician makes a worthwhile contribution to the planning process. His role is a necessary one. But we must not confuse his function with that of a paraprofessional, who by definition must be a part of the administrative hierarchy, with tasks that are endemic to the tasks of the professional staff person.

To these tasks the neighborhood resident can bring another dimension of experience and cognizance, which when fused in a team approach to planning decisions, just might result in more sensitive approaches to urban problem solving.

Matthew Arnold, in "The Future of Liberalism" has stated the case for the goals of the CUP program very well:

"If experience has established any one thing in this world, it has established this: it is well for any great class and description of men in society to be able to say for itself what it wants and not to have other classes, the so-called educated and intelligent classes, acting for it as proctors, and supposed to understand its wants and provide for them. A class may often itself not either fully understand its wants or adequately express them; but it has a nearer interest and a more sure diligence in the matter than any of its proctors and therefore a better chance of success."

These are many individual stories of success among CUP enrollees. They are a tribute to the efforts and endurance of individual students. If the program, as envisioned by the federal intent, is to fashion a "new breed" of social planners, then the efforts of agency staff, professional societies, educators, certification systems, and government officials, will have to match the determination and persistence of students struggling for their survival.