

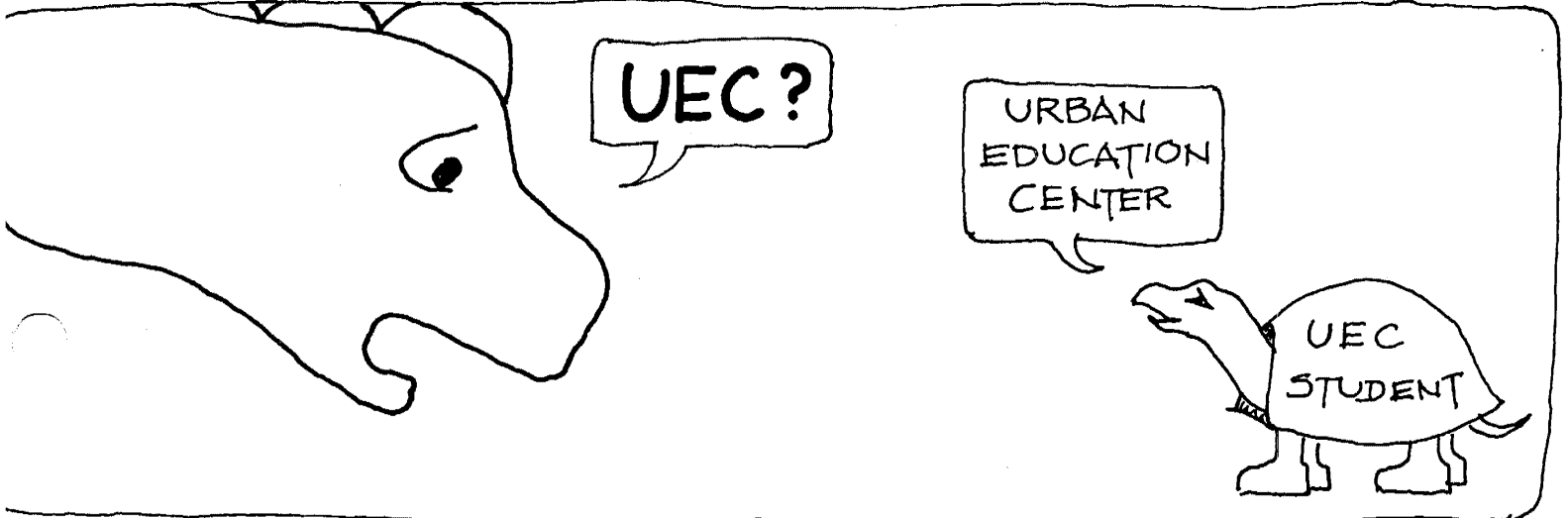
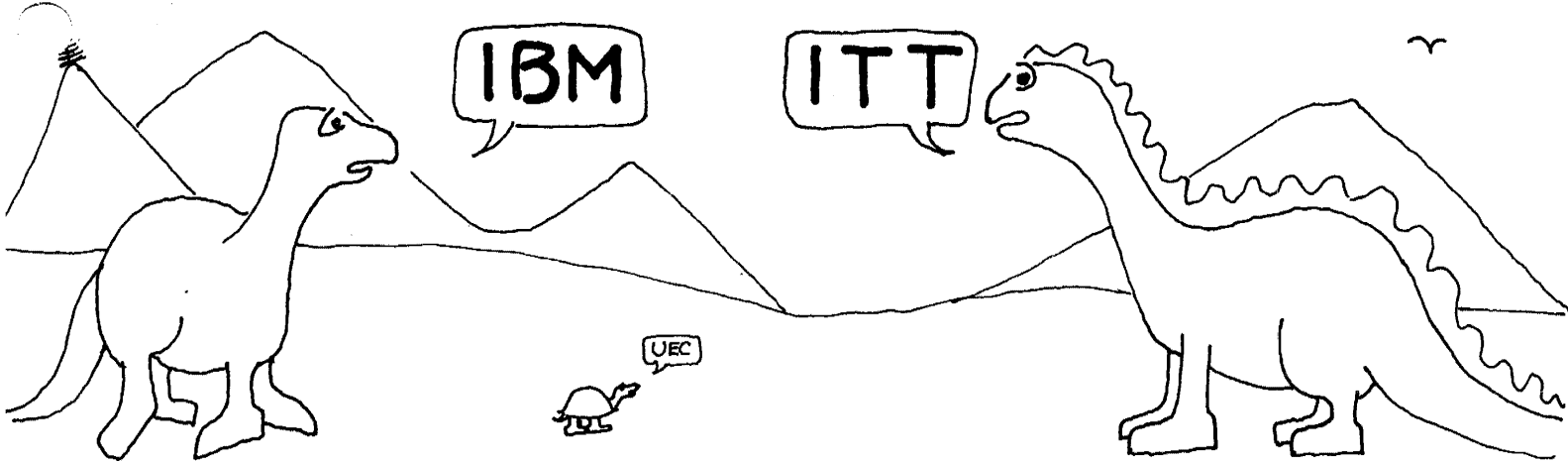
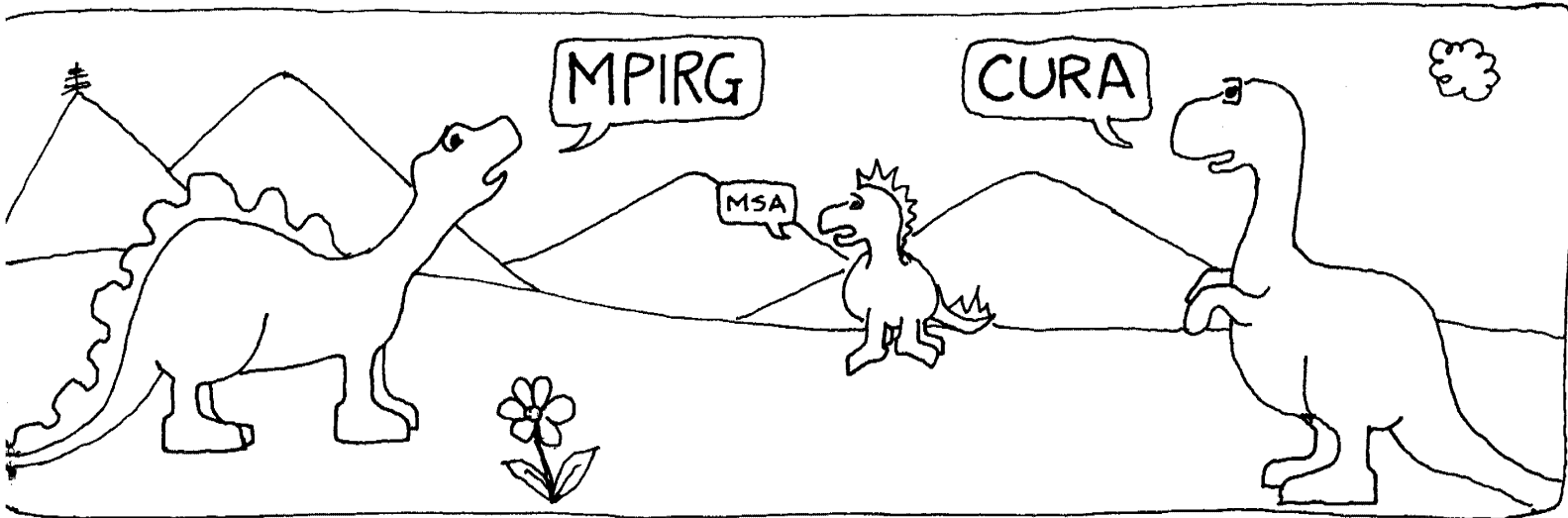
# CURA

VOLUME III, NUMBER 4

NOV. - DEC., 1973

# reporter

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# UEC/CDC A MEANS FOR SERVICE/LEARNING

Say the words URBAN EDUCATION CENTER (UEC) or COMMUNITY DESIGN CENTER (CDC) and you have described:

- 1 --A PLACE
- 2 --AN IDEA
- 3 --A SPIRIT --  
A COMMITMENT.

Take the parts one by one:

## FIRST -- THE PLACE

A great place for inspiration: the loft of an 1880's brick building -- rehabbed by University of Minnesota students -- full of color and light -- 4500 square feet of energized space bustling with energized people. (118 E. 26th St., Mpls.)

## SECOND -- AN IDEA LINKING THREE ELEMENTS

1. *Students*—filled with drive, rapidly expanding skill, and the deep desire to put skill and energy to work while enlarging their learning.

2. *Professionals*—based in Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Planning, Interior Design, Graphics -- talented people eager to serve those unable to buy their skills in the normal marketplace -- and ready to work with students too.

3. *Community clients* --sensitive enough to environmental problems to seek help in planning and design, but lacking those dollars needed to buy the expertise.

## THIRD -- A SPIRIT -- A COMMITMENT

The glue that pulls the parts together -- that draws students and professional volunteers into associations with their community clients, associations rich in both challenge and satisfaction -- compacts we call service/learning.

Then tie the parts together -- take them as a unit -- and you have UEC/CDC, a community service, co-learning chance for action, growth, and positive environmental change.

Central to the mission of UEC/CDC are *people* and *projects*.

**PEOPLE --  
their method of involvement,  
the way they function.**

**Students** get into the program by having a mix of skills and concern and by registering for a course which lets them put this mix to work. For advanced students in Architecture or Landscape Architecture (½ of our total group of 60-70 students per year) it means a design registration of 6-9 credits per quarter for a typical two or three quarters. Other students from disciplines such as Journalism, Photo-Journalism, Geography, Anthropology, Sociology or Urban Studies normally register via Directed Study or an Urban Studies Workshop. Anywhere from 4-10 credits per quarter is typical depending on the scope of the work and the student's other commitments.

**Professional Volunteers** are frequently and easily linked with students on those projects having student input. The nature and type of collaboration varies. The affiliation with CDC links us with CDC professional volunteers, which has proved to be very beneficial on a number of projects. Also, since March 1973, UEC has been the coordinating unit for University of Minnesota participants in the federally supported University Year for Action (UYA) Program. This gives us year round operating capacity.

**Community Clients** reach us in many ways. Typically the majority come from low-budget groups who hear about us from other groups already served by UEC or CDC. Officially we become the "servers" while the community clients become the "served." But in reality most projects generate an experience better described as "co-learning" -- an experience in which each party both serves and learns.

**PROJECTS --  
our central vehicle,  
learning coupled with serving.**

**Projects**, of course, become our central vehicle -- not as an end in themselves -- but as a means which allows for learning coupled with serving. We handle over 200 projects per year. Word of mouth brings us most of our projects just as it brings our clients. But our students, VISTAs, and staff also search out potentials and assist community groups and individuals in clarifying what these potentials are.

In some cases, we know about a project

before a quarter begins and we actively recruit students and faculty from appropriate disciplines to guarantee their input. Some of our best learning as well as our best service has come in cross-disciplinary collaboratives, such as the Renville County Development Project.

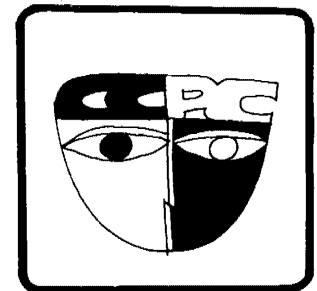
## A CAPSULE HISTORY

The Urban Education Center began, officially, in the summer of 1970, with financial support from the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota. It has steadily expanded since that time in size, scope, and number of projects per year, while striving to maintain the best possible service/learning interactions.

The central **OBJECTIVE** of UEC continues to be the achievement of positive learning experiences for students which simultaneously provide a needed service to community groups unable to afford the service on the open market.

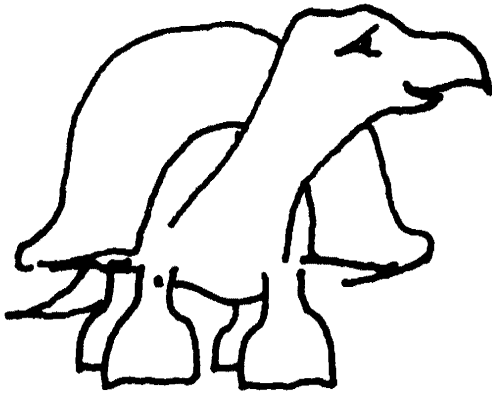
Most of our service/learning **CONTACTS** have been here in public agencies and private organizations in the Metropolitan Area of Minneapolis and St. Paul. But we have also worked outstate with many groups including Indians at the Ponsford Reservation, small businessmen in Ely, and citizens groups in a number of towns in Renville and other outstate counties.

UEC/CDC (cont'd on page 6)



Each year at UEC there are at least 15-20 graphics projects. Logos, letterheads and brochure designs are always in demand. Typically these projects are short but challenging efforts by one or at the most two students working with a citizen group or community-serving agency. The logo shown here was done by Noi Malliwan, an Architecture student from Thailand, for the Child Care Resource Center (CCRC) Board.

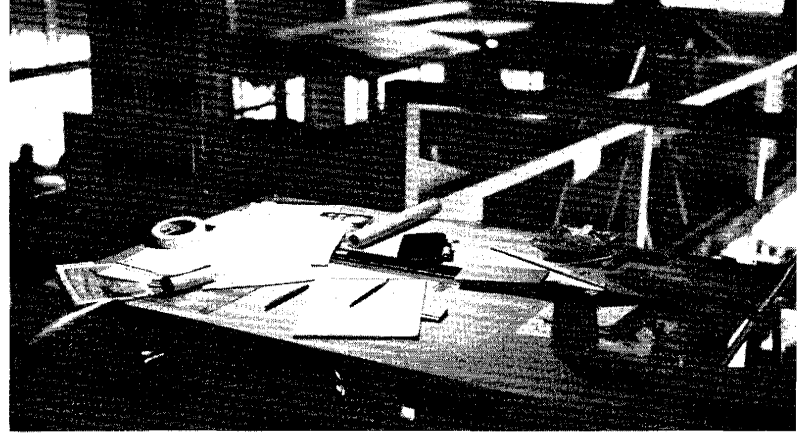
# South East Alternatives Free School Projects



at special request of three students...  
 a mechanical drawing class  
 UEC staff: David Kane

sessions on drawing board

- Triangles
- Scales
- Parallel rules
- erasers
- lead holder
- lead pointer



at request of all...  
 an extensive design for a lounge area on  
 main floor

UEC staff: Kent Moses, Fred Pagenkoph  
 talk with staff, students, principal,  
 parents  
 design, pictures of existing, 67 yards  
 of bum-wad, thoughts, present/revise/  
 erase/discard/present/revise/present,  
 review by UEC critics, build model

request for assistance from the school  
 in environment/awareness/architecture/  
 education course

acceptance by UEC as a project

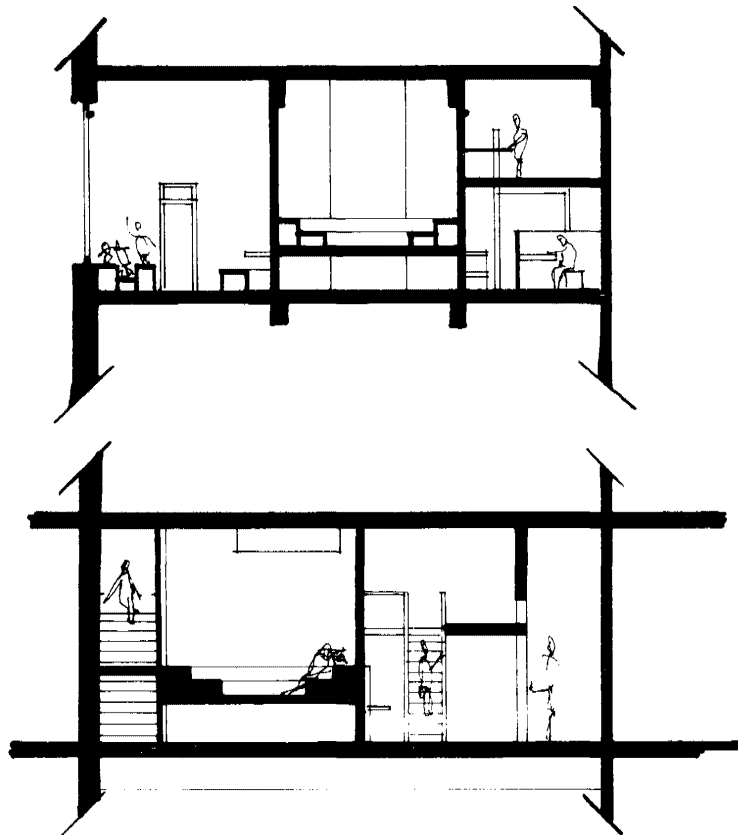
UEC staff: Kent Moses, Greg Hollen-  
 kamp, David Kane—architecture students  
 all

from student/staff/designer chats

- effect of space, volume, color on me
- what is design?
- what is an architect animal?
- what is circulation?
  - noise
  - people
  - vehicular
  - odor (ugh)
- field trips
  - Old Federal Courts (old) ↑
  - Community Design Center (old to  
new)
  - Metropolitan Courts Building (new)
- students want to, and do design a new  
town....

should there be money?  
 drawing to scale  
 what is scale?  
 what is drawing  
 what is to?

housing specialist student  
 environmentalist student  
 traffic expert student  
 commercial analyst student



at request of staff with student input...  
 graphic design for upstairs lounge areas  
 UEC staff: George Burton  
 talk  
 draw  
 color chips  
 specify paint  
 decide  
 review by UEC critics  
 fling paint  
 mess-up new pants

ON WHOLE PROJECT

WOW!

Something I designed is built, real, having impact on people and environment

I met a client with an inadequate building, my interaction with client, user, builders, suppliers, resulted in actual, tangible, physical change.

WOW!

Sure there were problems, conflict, wasted time (but words are cheaper by the ton)

Learning: Immeasurable for me, for students hopefully.

They are now conversant with architecture  
 Hell,  
 one of them may even wake up an architect one morning

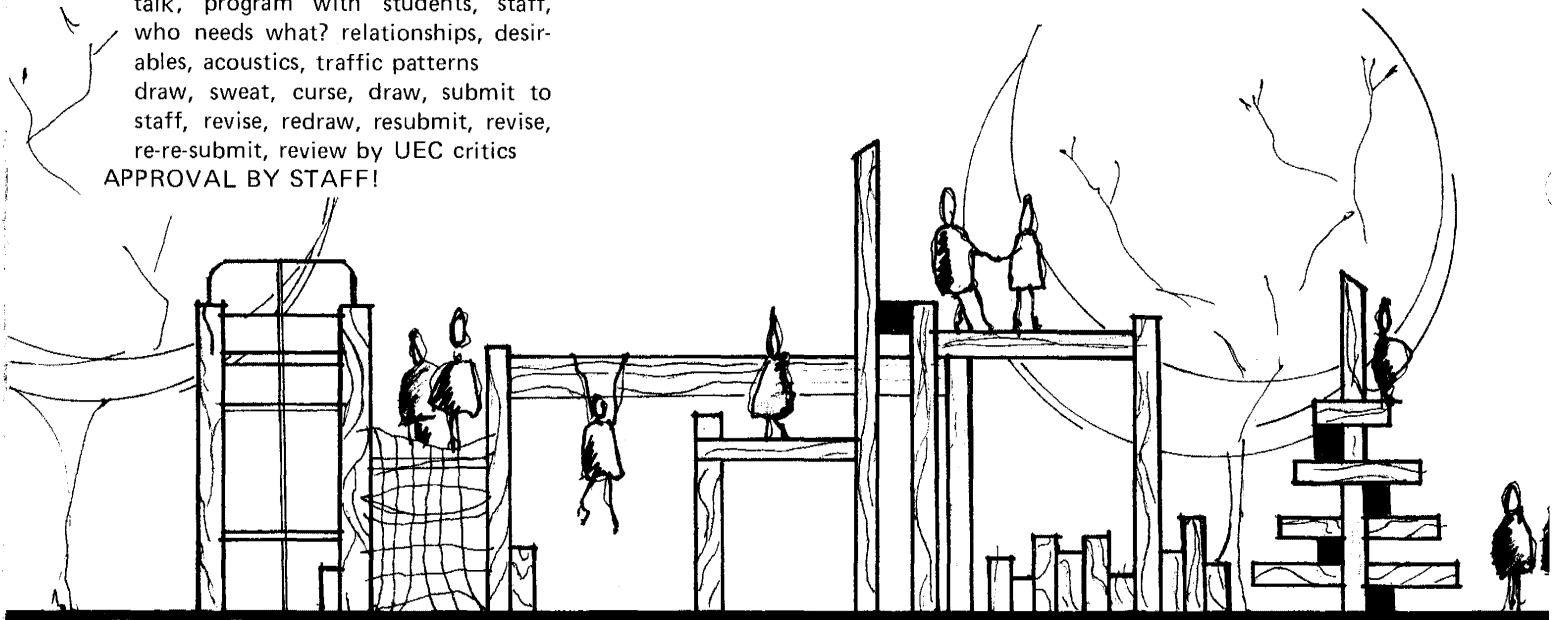
build build build  
 partitions  
 storage units  
 display panels  
 graphics, color  
 play facility  
 supervise construction

revel in realness of what for five months had been talk and drawings

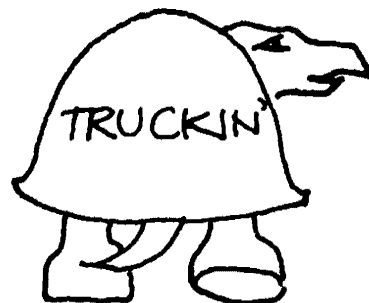
kids play on play facility  
 kids learn in re-vitalized spaces!

at request of Governing Board...  
 a long-range space allocation plan for the entire school—to be used as grant proposal of Federal funding.  
 UEC staff: David Kane

talk, program with students, staff, who needs what? relationships, desirables, acoustics, traffic patterns  
 draw, sweat, curse, draw, submit to staff, revise, redraw, resubmit, revise, re-re-submit, review by UEC critics  
**APPROVAL BY STAFF!**



at request of all...  
 a play facility  
 UEC staff: David Kane  
 design,  
 consult  
 get bids  
 select supplier  
 submit all to Washington for hopeful funding  
**FUNDING GRANTED!!!!**



Onward:

YES!

My thesis project in architecture will now be an alternative education facility, with knowledge and friendships from this project as instigating catalysts

What else can I say?

*David Kane*, student UEC  
 (Bob Schmitt, Ned Pratt, graphics)

# Renville County Development Project

From the Village of Fairfax in Renville County, Minnesota, came the following comments in a letter from the Mayor and the President of the Civic and Commerce Association, to University President, Malcom Mjos.

On behalf of the community of Fairfax, we wish to thank four of your fine students (from UEC)...for their excellent job done in surveying our community, especially the downtown business district,...and for making models, photographs, and recommendations for the betterment of our town. They have worked tirelessly and cooperatively with downtown merchants and have given us many new ideas and insights for improving our business environment. We would like to express our gratitude and thank them...They certainly deserve praise for a job well done.

The Renville County Development Project provides an excellent example of a large scale, multi-faceted, service/learning project. The project involved students from seven different disciplines, over 15 months, in an effort to help Renville County take a look at itself and its development position in relation to the surrounding region.

Activity in Renville county grew out of a study-project undertaken in 1971 by John Sanger, a student in architecture. John grew up in Renville County. As a University student he became concerned about the county's future. Decreasing population and lack of adequate new opportunities were problems he found especially worrisome. But he also saw the problems as a challenge which he proposed to confront. The result was a two quarter planning study of the county resulting in a two-volume report. This initial study led to the funding of the Development Project through Title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Title I provided money for student travel to the county and for a project coordinator to provide continuity for the 3 quarters and one summer of the Project. During the duration of the funded project, students from seven disciplines undertook ten projects relating to the county as a whole, and to four of the individual villages.

The initial planning report gave substance to the contention that the futures of Renville County communities were tied together — to one another and to

PROJECTS	NO. OF STUDENTS	DISCIPLINES INVOLVED
Slide presentation of initial planning study	4	Architecture ½ quarter
Renville Co. Fairgrounds redesign	8	Landscape Architecture ½ quarter
Attitude survey of County H.S. students to determine immediate plans after H.S., ideal size of community	1 1 1	Geography 1 quarter Urban Studies Soc
Bird Island downtown design	5	Architecture over 4 quarters
Fairfax downtown design	4	Architecture over 4 quarters
Hector downtown design	4	Architecture over 4 quarters
Olivia downtown design	3	Architecture over 4 quarters
Service area survey of Renville Co.	4	Geography
Newspaper articles for county papers	5	Ag., Journalism
4-H Photography Project	1	Photo—Journalism

the larger communities in surrounding counties.

Following the report, the Project undertook a series of practical projects in order to translate the planning report into community-based action.

Thus the downtown design projects sought to give impetus to Village efforts to define a commercial role for themselves.

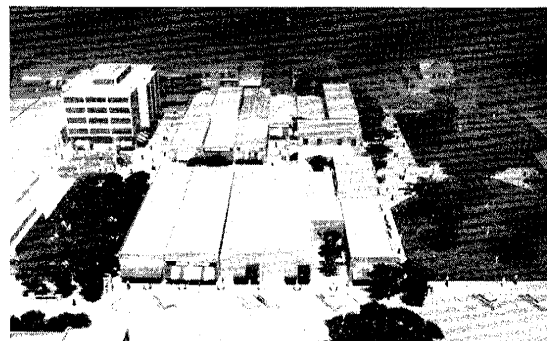
Newspaper articles were prepared to discuss development issues and describe the design projects.

The high school student attitude survey was conducted to give community leaders a systematic indication of students' reasons for leaving after graduation; their attitudes towards living and working in small communities; and their hopes of returning. The survey was distributed through seven of the ten school districts of the county, with the social studies classes participating in the survey.

The fairgrounds design project assisted the county agricultural society's attempt to enhance the "county-ness" of the fair.

The service-area survey was designed to indicate the extent to which competition for a variety of commercial activities is bypassing county communities. University students worked with local merchants through their civic and commerce committees to get an initial impression of the distribution of commercial activity and services. The students then worked with the ten local high schools to distribute a questionnaire to all juniors and seniors. This

provided a picture of the community where families shopped most often for each of twenty-six foods or services. From this information, the competition among region communities can be seen.



Proposal for location of elderly housing project and downtown beautification.

In all projects, communication between communities and students was a vital factor allowing the students to work effectively.

In Hector, for example, the design students proposed a combined farm machinery display and demonstration area to take advantage of a concentration of equipment dealers in the village — an idea which had been discussed over time by the dealers, but without a picture of how such an arrangement might look.

During the surveys, the university students spent time talking with local residents, with high school students, and administrators in an effort to get a "feel" of the communities and thus give their research efforts greater relevance and accuracy.

*Bob Morse, Assoc. Director UEC*

reporter



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### UEC/CDC (from page 2)

Perhaps our most important **RESULT** is the continuously recurring discovery that service/learning can be a tremendous growth experience for students, while simultaneously affording meaningful interactions with and products for limited-budget community groups.

Our **MAJOR CONCERN** is to keep matching needs of the community with needs and skills of students, to allow for service and shared growth coupled with an expansion of knowledge. As long as open communication and trust are maintained, our efforts seem to be successful. The Urban Education Center has given the University, through CURA, a substantially enlarged capacity to respond directly to many of the environmental design and community service needs of low-budget groups in the community.

One student gave a six-part assessment of the merits of the program as she saw them, based on one quarter of contact.

"First, new methods and directions of learning are being tested here...Second, students are encouraged to learn on their own through discovery and inquiry, instead of having the information poured into them while they sit back passively. Third, in contrast with the normal competitive arrangement, students share experiences and become resources of information and learning for each other. It is this sense of community, inside of the studio and out, which Urban Education Center stresses as a major method of learning...Fourth, the teacher has become more of a guide than a teller or prescriber. In fact, the

teacher may learn as much from the student as the student does from the teacher through the informal exchange of ideas....Fifth, students are given a choice of projects. Thus, liberalization of study not only prepares the student for a lifetime of learning; it also promotes curiosity and imagination and expands the individual's areas of interest....Sixth, and probably most important of all, the student (through service/learning) is allowed the 'real thing', the actual venturing out into the field and the direct dealing with the low-income community, a segment which the practicing architect has traditionally ignored in favor of the well-to-do client.

Although many frustrations have arisen during the quarter, I feel that this is a positive characteristic of the experience....Being initially frustrated presented a healthy challenge for the mind to investigate, to grasp, and conquer. Probably one learns best from these frustrations and mistakes."

IN SUMMARY, then, we have UEC/CDC — more than school, more than service:

1. a sense of place;
2. an idea and a feeling;
3. a spirit — a philosophical and emotional commitment.

These are the moving force of Urban Education Center/Community Design Center, an experiment in service/learning.

*Roger Clemence, Director UEC*

### SERVICE/LEARNING COUNCIL AND FIELD EXPERIENCE CATALOGUE

In addition to its prime function as an action organization and project-oriented Center, UEC also strives to broaden the University-wide involvement in service/learning. In large part this effort depends on good communication among persons, departments, agencies, etc. interested in facilitating field experience education in its many forms. Concern for such communication has led this fall to two activities which should interest readers of this issue.

The first, known as the **Service/Learning Council**, is the outgrowth of an effort initiated in August of this year by representatives of UEC and the Twin Cities Area Urban Corps. Thus far it has served primarily as a meeting point for persons engaged in various brokerage aspects of field experience education. More than 60 persons are now involved.

The second activity might be described as a project of the Service/Learning Council. We have tentatively called it the **FIELD EXPERIENCE CATALOGUE**. As planned the Catalogue will offer a brief description of field experience opportunities available to students and will describe how these opportunities can be arranged. The first issue of the Catalogue should be published before the middle of Winter quarter. Those who have information to include and who have not been contacted by mid-December should call Cathy deMoll at 827-2608 or Alice Kingsley at 373-2612.