

March 14, 2011

East St. Louis Action Research Project

Annual Report to College of Fine and Applied Arts

Accomplishments, Academic Year 2010-2011

During the past year, ESLARP has continued to its mission to support mutually beneficial partnerships between the University of Illinois community and organizations serving the residents of East St. Louis. Based on an ongoing strategic planning process, ESLARP leadership is evaluating its work in order to maintain its strengths in service-learning opportunities and engagement and to build its research capacity and outreach to the campus community.

Service-Learning and Engaged Learning Resource for UIUC Campus

ESLARP serves the university and college as an essential resource for civically-engaged student learning. ESLARP has taken a more active role in orienting the Outreach Weekends as service-learning opportunities, developing its own courses (FAA 291 and FAA 391), and facilitating courses from a range of disciplines to work in East St. Louis.

	TOTAL STUDENTS
Outreach Weekends (this includes students in 291 and some students from affiliated courses)	309
ESLARP Courses (291, 391)	178
ESLARP-affiliated courses in Departments (LA, ARCH, GSLIS	131

ESLARP conducted a two-day orientation for 6 graduate research assistants and 5 contributing faculty in August 2010. The four (4) outreach weekend trips in 2010-11 had 309 unique participants. The outreach weekend involves an over-night experience that includes an orientation, work with community partners, and lively discussions during meals and travel. Students worked with residents on a range of projects, included park and open-space clean-ups, surveying housing conditions in one neighborhood, assisting with the on-going activities of a shelter for homeless veterans, and completion of a shelter for women and families. New open space/landscape projects developed from a partnership with the city park district and the public health district.

In the fall and spring terms, 160 students, the majority from outside FAA, participated in FAA 291, *Civic Engagement in East St. Louis, Illinois*. This is a 1-credit course in which students attend an orientation meeting, participate in an Outreach Weekend, and complete a reflective exercise and discussion. During the fall semester, students represented a wide range of majors (Accounting, Architecture, Art & Design, Business, Communications, Community Health, Journalism, Media, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Speech & Hearing, and Urban Planning).

ESLARP also offers a 3-credit course *Undergraduate Action Research Seminar*. Fall enrollment included 10 students from four departments and Spring enrollment included 8 students from three departments. This course is taught by Abbie Harmon in the Fall term and Sang Lee in the Spring term. This course is an option to fulfill requirements for the James Scholar Program.

In addition, there are student organizations and departmental courses working with ESLARP and community partners in East St. Louis and Champaign-Urbana, including:

- Introduction to Networking Systems (LIS 451, Martin Wolske); - course based in East St. Louis and Champaign
- Entrepreneurship and Recreation Enterprises (RST 218, Bruce Wicks);
- Special Problems (RST 393, Bruce Wicks)

Involved organizations fall 2010/spring 2011

- UIUC's Minority Leadership Group
- AIAS Freedom by Design
- Illinois MBA

ESLARP Faculty doing work in Champaign area

- Gale Fulton – John Street
- Martin Wolske – various technology centers
- Jacqueline McDowell (RST) – shoulders project with Boys and Girls Club

ESLARP has continues to collaborate with the University's Leadership Center. Currently, two ESLARP alums are serving as coaches in the Imprint Program. ESLARP's FAA 391 is being considered a course to fulfill requirements for the Leadership Center minor.

Engagement, Service, and Applied Research

ESLARP has continued to provide technical assistance to our partnering organizations working to improve conditions in East St. Louis. Some of our recent efforts include (name in parentheses indicates key leadership on this project):

- Housing condition survey and predatory lending assessment (Dearborn)
- Assistance with opening of a homeless shelter for veterans (ESLARP staff)
- Assistance with the development of a public health fair (Wicks)
- Organizing for the development of a community-based GIS data system (Wolske)
- Development of new mentorship program for young women interested in recreation and sports (McDowell)
- 29 community technology centers
- 20 youth in the Teen Tech program
- Continued development of Pullman Porter Park, a community-maintained open space (Staff)

- A range of design, construction, and renovation projects (ESLARP staff)
- Capacity building for struggling neighborhood organizations (ESLARP staff)

ESLARP has made a concerted effort to increase access to ongoing research and scholarship. Recently published or in-process peer-reviewed publications include:

Lawson, Laura and Jane Tigan "[Designing for the Long Haul: Approaches to Address Mutual Benefits in the East St. Louis Action Research Project](#)" *Batture*, vol 6, Reciprocity, Dec. 2010, pp. 54-67.

Lawson, Laura and Janni Sorensen. "[When Overwhelming Effort Meets Underwhelming Prospects: Sustaining Community Open Space Activism in East St. Louis.](#)" *Insurgent Public Space*. Edited by Jeff Hou.

Lawson, Laura, Lisa Spanierman, V. Paul Poteat, Amanda Beer. "Is it Professional or Personal? Engagement, Race, and Reflection in the East St. Louis Community-based Design Studio." In *Erasing Boundaries – Supporting Communities*. Edited by Cheryl Doble, Paula Horrigan, and Tom Angotti. (Oakland, CA: New Village Press, forthcoming 2011).

Lawson, Laura, Lisa Spanierman, V. Paul Poteat, and Amanda Beer. "Best Place for Best Practice? The Challenge of Multicultural Learning in a Community-based Design Studio." In *Implementing Diversity: Contemporary Challenges and Best Practices at the University of Illinois and other Predominantly White Institutions*. Edited by Helen Neville, Margaret Hunt Browne and Jorge Chapa. Illinois: Center for Democracy in a Multiracial Society (upcoming).

Dearborn, Lynne. "Rehab, Rebuild, Renew: ESLARP's Work with Two Community Partners," *Activist Architecture: The Philosophy and Practice of Community Design Centers*, edited by Craig L. Wilkins (New York: Princeton Architectural Press forthcoming 2011).

Dearborn, Lynne. "Action Research: Investigating, Reflecting, and Applying Service-Learning Experience in Professional Practice," *Erasing Boundaries – Supporting Communities*, edited by Cheryl Doble, Paula Horrigan and Tom Angotti (Oakland, CA: New Village Press, forthcoming 2011).

Outreach/Publicity

This year we have made a concerted effort to increase the visibility of ESLARP on campus, to community partners, to other universities, and to the general public. Our recent activities include:

- [Eagle's Nest Opens Doors](#), (Belleville News-Democrat)
- [UI Students Travel to St. Louis to Construct Domestic Abuse Shelter](#) (Daily Illini, pg.6)
- Bruce Wicks, ESLARP Campus Advisory Committee Member
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Spirit Award
- Martin Wolske, ESLARP Campus Advisory Committee Member
Graduate School of Library and Information Science
- Abbilyn Harmon, Graduate Student in Landscape Architecture
[Department of Housing and Urban Development's Doctoral Dissertation Research Grant](#)
- ESLARP was selected as the University of Illinois nomination for the Kellogg Foundation McGrath Award

São Tomé and the Illinois Global Action Research Project

ESLARP's engagement in São Tomé and Príncipe continues. The Island government is making progress on funding one of the proposed schools. This will include some funding support for technical assistance provided by the University of Illinois. Details remain unclear at this time.

Holcim Air Quality Grant

ESLARP is the process of finalizing negotiations for a 3-year, \$600,000 grant to monitor and facilitate community education related to air quality in the Metro-East and St. Louis areas. This grant grew out of a legal settlement from the Holcim Corporation. Partners include American Bottom Conservancy, Missouri Coalition for the Environment, Sierra Club, Webster Groves Nature Study Society. ESLARP will manage the funds and will hire staff (part-time project manager and full-time on-site community coordinator, with graduate assistants as needed), engage in outreach and citizen education efforts, support air quality monitoring projects, and provide related computer technological support. Paul Adams has been hired as the Project Director. A search is in progress for an air quality specialist.

Budget for FY12 and Impact of 10% Cut

The budget is developed with two strategic shifts in resources: first, a stronger relationship with the Metro-East University Collaborative and second, moving the service learning and community-based course projects to Central Illinois.

The Metro East University Collaborative (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Washington University, St. Louis University, Principia College and SWICCC) is moving forward with plans to increase service-based learning opportunities for their students in the metro East St. Louis communities that ESLARP has historically served. This has provided ESLARP with an opportunity to develop stronger relationships with these institutions. During the academic year ESLARP participated on three joint service projects.

Despite increasing student demand, low participation by Illinois faculty willing or able to provide site supervision on outreach weekends and increased costs of travel have significantly reduced ESLARP's ability to provide meaningful service learning experiences in East St. Louis. During FY 12 ESLARP will transfer the responsibility for service learning activities in East St. Louis to the Metro East University Collaborative located at SIUE. Fine & Applied Arts –Illinois Action Research – will shift service learning course offerings to projects and partners located East Central Illinois. This shift will provide greater accessibility to the service learning courses for faculty and students alike, reducing time commitments and travel costs. It is expected that section offerings in FAA 291 & 391 will increase. A key component of the proposed budget is faculty development that includes seed grants for course development and stipends for faculty mentors.

ESLARP Draft Budget FY 12*

EXPENSE	BUDGET
Administration (General operating expenses)	
Personnel	53,000
Printing	1,500
Office Supplies/Materials	1,500
Telecom (on/off campus)	3,500
Travel/conference (non community outreach)	5,000
Other	1,200
Total Admin	65,700
Student learning	
Personnel (<i>Graduate Research/Teaching Assistants</i>)	48,000
Personnel (<i>FAA 291 Instructor</i>)	5,700
1 Fall Outreach activity in East St. Louis (60 students)	6,000
Local outreach	14,000
Total Student Learning	73,700
Faculty Development	
Seed Grants (5) @ \$1500	7,500

Mentor stipends (5) @ \$500	2,500
Total Faculty Development	10,000
Global Action Research	
International activities	5,000
Total Global Action Research	5,000
Total	154,400

*Draft budget reflects 5% reduction from FY 11

**Staff salary Includes increase from FY 11

Scenarios

FY 11 Budget	162,545
5% budget reduction	<u>8,127</u>
	154,418
FY 11 Budget	162,545
10% budget reduction	<u>16,255</u>
	146,290

Both Scenarios are based on the elimination of the Community Liaison position in East St. Louis with a reallocation of the remaining funds to the new initiatives. The 10% scenario would also eliminate international activities and reduce the scope of joint fall outreach with the Metro-East Collaborative by half.