Improving Life in Our Urban Regions

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The Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University is a remarkable place. Our award-winning students and faculty are engaged in six different undergraduate degrees, five masters degrees and an interdisciplinary doctoral program.

Each Levin College program is inspired by the belief that the most creative ideas come from mixing different academic disciplines with the deep knowledge of community leaders, elected officials, business owners and neighborhood residents. U.S. News and World Report recently ranked our programs #2 in the nation in city management & urban policy and #12 in nonprofit management.

Today, urban issues in the U.S. and around the world cross every political, cultural, economic, and ideological boundary. For the first time in history more than half of the world’s population lives in cities and their surrounding urban regions.

As we begin another academic year, we reflect on our responsibility to continue the Levin tradition of creating new solutions, and to prepare future professionals to improve the quality of life in our urban world.

This report provides a handful of examples of the work of our staff, our students, and our partners. Please search our website to learn more about the Levin approach to learning and don’t hesitate to contact those whose work is described. Better yet, come visit the College and see for yourself. Our full schedule of programs, public forums, and activities are also available on our website.

Bob Gleeson, Ph.D.
Interim Dean,
Professor and Albert A. Levin Chair of Urban Studies and Public Service
WHAT WE DO

- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ECONOMICS
- COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
- ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY, PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY
- CITY & PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
- NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP
- URBAN POLICY, GOVERNANCE & LAW

LIST OF DEGREES

BA Urban Studies
BA Public Safety Management
BA Environmental Studies
BA Nonprofit Administration
BA Organizational Leadership
BA Organizational Leadership (ONLINE DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM)
BA Economic Development
Master of Public Administration
Master of Urban Planning and Development
Master of Science in Urban Studies
Master of Arts in Environmental Studies
Master of Nonprofit Administration and Leadership
JD/Master of Arts in Environmental Studies
JD/Master of Public Administration
JD/Master of Urban Planning and Development
Ph.D. in Urban Studies and Public Affairs
One of the hottest topics in public administration these days goes by the scholarly term “co-production.” This means having citizens participate directly in helping local governments provide essential services. “311” phone systems, for example, allow residents to alert city officials about problems in real time. Associate Professor Benjamin Clark and Assistant Professor Tatyana Guzman, who have been conducting research on this topic for several years, report more and more innovative approaches to citizen co-production throughout Northeastern Ohio.

A great example of innovative work in this field is Open Cleveland, which meets in the Levin College Atrium. This self-described volunteer group of web developers, designers, data-geeks and general “hackers” meets every three weeks to help units of local government and other civic organizations leverage open web technologies to engage residents directly in solving important problems. One project, for example, takes Cleveland City Council records and “frees” them from PDF format so data can be more easily extracted and analyzed. Another is a website that helps homeowners in the region buy next-door vacant lots for side yard expansions.

Manufacturing in Ohio lost its rust a long time ago. Today the state competes as one of the world’s most advanced clusters of companies that are leading the way in additive manufacturing, machining, joining, forming & molding and many other components of the global economy. The Levin College’s Center for Economic Development plays important roles in statewide partnerships to provide critical information to company executives, workforce training agencies, and state & local policy makers so they can stay ahead of fast changing technologies and changing market conditions. One recent example is an extensive analysis of the vast complex of sophisticated machining companies that has helped transform the region’s competitiveness.

Working as partners with the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) and the Ohio Manufacturing Institute, Levin researchers Edward (Ned) Hill, Merissa Piazza, and Molly Schnoke mixed data analyses, interviews and focus groups with key executives, and the results of online surveys to anticipate emerging trends in technologies, markets, and the need for specially trained workers.
ALL THE POSSIBILITIES START WITH PEOPLE

Wondering if Cleveland’s “renaissance” is merely a figment of some booster’s imagination? For validation, look no further than the work of the Levin College’s Center for Population Dynamics. Work by urban innovator Richey Piiparinen, executive-in-residence and long-time analyst of Cleveland’s development scene Tom Bier, and research associate Charlie Post is updating the region’s image of itself by focusing on how migration and social networks are influencing economic and community development throughout the city and its urban area.

Since its inception in 2014, the Center’s work has been profiled by Forbes, the Globe and Mail, ESPN the Magazine, the Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post, and the Atlantic, while Richey Piiparinen has written extensively on the state of Cleveland and the region for Cleveland Magazine, the Plain Dealer, Crain’s Cleveland, the Huffington Post, and Daily Beast.

The Center for Population Dynamic’s work is funded by Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, Global Cleveland, the Cleveland Foundation, and the Downtown Cleveland Alliance. Going forward, the Center’s research includes: (1) working with partner organizations to craft a policy “playbook” for regional economic development, with a focus on healthcare R&D and medical technology; (2) identifying the emerging market dynamics that can spark an urban infill housing plan for the City of Cleveland; and (3) partnering with Case Western Reserve’s National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities to help build new forms of social capital as inner city areas revitalize.
ECONOMIC INCLUSION PROGRAM CHANGING INCLUSION LANDSCAPE

Collaboration = a working practice where individuals or institutions work together to a common purpose to achieve benefit.

Looking for a world-class example of innovative collaboration? Look no further than the landmark partnership of major anchor institutions in Cleveland’s University Circle area. Brokered in 2005 by the Cleveland Foundation, leaders of the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, Case Western Reserve University, the City of Cleveland and other partners formed the Greater University Circle Initiative (GUCI). In this unprecedented collaboration, the “anchors” agreed to work together to create “jobs, income and ownership opportunities” for residents in the Hough, Glenville, Fairfax, Central, Buckeye-Shaker, Little Italy neighborhoods as well as in the city of East Cleveland. The GUCI combines the economic power of anchor institutions with the resources of philanthropy and government to create economic opportunity, build individual wealth, and strengthen communities in the neighborhoods around University Circle and the Health Tech Corridor of Cleveland.

The GUCI set four broad goals: Buy Local. Hire Local. Live Local. Connect. In 2011, the GUCI leadership group joined forces with the Health Tech Corridor and created the Economic Inclusion program to implement these goals.

At the same time the Economic Inclusion Management Committee (EIMC) was formed to guide the implementation. They turned to the Levin College’s Center for Economic Development and Center for Community Planning and Development to serve as the EIMC’s data and assessment partner. Led by Walter Wright and Toni White, the College’s Economic Inclusion Program provides annual assessments and ongoing data-driven advice that informs and improves this innovative effort to demonstrate how neighborhood revitalization can be achieved through economic inclusion.
With hundreds of alumni spread across Greater Cleveland, the Levin College’s Center for Leadership Development has earned its reputation as the premier training center for public sector employees. Its flagship program, the Leadership Academy, began in 1993 based upon a recommendation from the Ohio Commission on Public Service that leadership development was a good way to enhance the accountability of public sector organizations. The Academy opened its doors to municipal employees from local, county and regional government to address issues of leadership, management and supervision. Leadership Academy Class #25 starts up in December 2015.

The purpose of the Leadership Academy is to help elected officials, policymakers, senior administrators, and community executives analyze, design, and collaborate on contemporary urban issues. Working together with the Center’s **Lisa Thomas** and **Rob Ziol**, these leaders explore the challenges of public sector governance, gaining insight into themselves and others.

The Academy consists of ten modules over a nine-month course of study and culminates with a community service capstone project.

In addition to the Leadership Academy, the Center for Leadership Development offers a variety of training programs for both public and nonprofit employers. It offers certified training as part of the Lean Ohio Boot Camp program, helping municipal employees identify ways to eliminate waste while increasing efficiency. The Public Management Academy specializes in mid-level managers and supervisors who seek to enhance their organizational skills.

The Center is currently working with the Greater Cleveland Regional Transportation Authority (GCRTA) on a specialized training program for mid-level practitioners. The Center also provides consulting services on a variety of topics including strategic planning, newly elected officials training, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator assessments, and neighborhood development. For additional program information check the Center’s web pages.
COMMUNITY POLICING UP CLOSE

Improving the relationships between neighborhood residents and local police forces is once again on the agendas of local, state and national leaders. The Levin College’s tradition of blending academic scholarship, applied research, and community engagement encourages its faculty, staff, and students to play important roles in helping to find solutions to these complex issues. The recent work of Associate Professor Ronnie Dunn provides an excellent example.

Professor Dunn has been instrumental in the U.S. Department of Justice’s investigation of the Cleveland Police Department and the development of the consent decree that recently was negotiated between the parties. Along with a number of civil rights and civil liberties advocates, he participated in community meetings designed to disseminate information and facilitate community input. He also was interviewed by the DOJ about his extensive research on policing and studies of the Cleveland Police Department in particular. Working with the newly formed Collaborative for a Safe, Fair, and Just Cleveland, he helped develop specific recommendations for local police reform, 85% of which were reflected in the final consent decree. He was also invited to submit testimony to the President’s Commission on 21st Century Policing and he serves on the Ohio Taskforce on Community-Police Relations. Ohio’s Governor John Kasich appointed him to serve on the Ohio Collaborative Police Advisory Board, which is establishing new statewide policies.
Each year the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) recognizes three outstanding class projects or papers by students in accredited planning programs across the country. Awards are given in three categories at the annual meeting of the American Planning Association (APA). Students in the Levin College’s Planning Studio class, which is part of our nationally ranked Masters of Urban Planning and Development program, won the award in the category “Contribution of Planning to Contemporary Issues.”

The studio project, entitled “Irishtown Greenway: A Strategic Plan for the Flats West Bank” was overseen by Professor and Associate Dean Wendy Kellogg and Mr. Jim Kastelic, College Fellow and planning professional. The Trust for Public Land, which is developing a trail to link the west bank of the Cuyahoga River with Lake Erie called the Lake Link Trail, was the external client for the studio project. The project team developed recommendations for amenities and design elements along the trail and strategies to leverage the trail for economic development, public green space and neighborhood redevelopment.

The student project team included: Juleian Curtis, Nikki Glazer, Dion Harris, Dean Ibsen, Kyle Krewson, Andrew Lang, Shiqi Lu, Darrick Matthews, Michael Mears, Matthew Moss, Caylen Payne, Scott Schirm, Steve Sump, and Ann Thompson. Michael Mears and Ann Thompson accepted the award on behalf of the class at the national conference of the American Planning Association in Seattle, Washington. The two other national awards were given to student groups from the University of Texas at Austin (“Applied Research”) and Harvard’s Kennedy School (“Application of the Planning Process”).
Although we all sometimes take it for granted, water is one of the most important assets for any urban environment. The ongoing drought in the American west illustrates the advantage that cities in the Great Lakes basin may have in the future. Yet the recent algal blooms in Lake Erie offshore from Toledo remind us all of the importance of protecting this great asset. Faculty at the Levin College are engaged in several water policy initiatives with the greater Cleveland community—projects focused on protecting and sustaining the Great Lakes.

Led by Professor and Associate Dean Wendy Kellogg, Cleveland State University became a founding partner of the Cleveland Water Alliance, a collaborative of public agencies, universities, and water industry businesses working to leverage Cleveland’s location on Lake Erie for economic development and community benefit.

Professor Kellogg also helped organize research teams of faculty, students, and research staff at the Center for Economic Development and the Center for Planning and Community Development to conduct three research projects that investigated watershed governance; determined the value of tree preservation for property values as a rationale for protecting water resources; and identified water conservation best practices to reduce the need for water withdrawal permits under the Great Lake Compact. These projects were support by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Lake Erie Commission.

Professor Kellogg will also chair a major national conference, Water Resilient Cities, to be held at the Levin College in April 2016. The conference will bring together researchers and water professionals for two days to focus on climate change and impacts on infrastructure, economic activity, and governance in the Great Lakes basin. Participants will identify research gaps and best practices in the basin.

The conference is preceded by a two-day workshop organized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for water utility operators focused on adjusting operations to respond to climate change trends.
**PIONEERING SCHOLAR JOINS LEVIN COLLEGE’S NATIONALLY RANKED NONPROFIT PROGRAM**

*Dennis R. Young*, a pioneering scholar in nonprofit studies, joins the College’s Center for Nonprofit Policy & Practice as Executive Research Fellow and Executive in Residence. The Center provides applied research and community service benefiting the local, regional and national nonprofit community. Recent projects have focused on: organizational governance; board development; redrafting bylaws; mentoring and coaching of leadership committees; assessment of decision-making processes and procedures in committee settings; board recruitment strategies; and position descriptions and organizational hierarchy chart of committees and authority.

The College also serves as host institution for the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC), and Center Director and Assistant Dean *Stuart C. Mendel* has served as both President Elect and President of this national organization. Recent initiatives of NACC have included a comprehensive revision of the NACC Undergraduate Graduate Curricular Guidelines, development of nonprofit academic program accreditation guidelines, and forming partnerships with the *Journal of Nonprofit Education & Leadership*. Dr. Mendel also holds the position of associate editor for acquisitions of the Journal.

**PARTNERSHIP WITH CEOs FOR CITIES HELPS MEASURE URBAN SUCCESS**

According to CEOs for Cities President *Lee Fisher*, the four letters in the word “city” are essentially the genetic code of urban success: Connections, Innovation, Talent and Your Distinctiveness. CEOs for Cities is a member-supported nonprofit that connects urban leaders, across sectors, generations and the country with research, events and a national network of change-makers to make change in America’s cities. In a unique and collaborative partnership, the Levin College hosts the national offices of CEOs for Cities. The College’s Center for Economic Development works closely with CEOs for Cities on research and analysis. An example is the widely used report City Vitals 3.0.

This report provides a set of variables to help cities track and benchmark their performance in six key areas: Connections, Innovation, Talent, Your Distinctness, Core Vitality, and Metropolitan Performances. The Center measured 30 variables for the 130 largest metropolitan areas in the United States. City Vitals honors and highlights the performance and importance of our nation’s metropolitan regions and their cities. Another project, City Dividends, is designed to help urban leaders make the case for public policies that will help raise incomes, encourage citizens to drive less and increase opportunities for bringing people out of poverty. City Dividends establishes a framework for examining the policies, actions and conditions needed for cities to actualize these gains. The partnership is also developing additional benchmark measures for CEOs for Cities.
The Cleveland Restoration Society has been a major influence locally and nationally in the movement to preserve the built environment of America’s legacy cities even as community leaders work to encourage new forces of revitalization. Levin College Assistant Professor Stephanie Ryberg-Webster, in partnership with the Society, organized the “Historic Preservation in America’s Legacy Cities” conference, held at the Levin College in June 2014. The interdisciplinary event brought together preservationists, community and economic developers, planners, policymakers, and others from across the nation to collaborate, share ideas, and devise solutions to the challenges of preservation so that short-term problems of vacancy, abandonment and demolition don’t inadvertently destroy historical and cultural assets. The convening worked to bring preservation more squarely into urban policymaking and pushed preservationists to update their practices in response to legacy cities’ needs.

The event received financial support from the Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the Ohio Humanities Council, and City of Cleveland Councilman Jeffrey Johnson. Sessions focused on African American heritage, preservation tax credits, industrial heritage, downtown revitalization, preservation policy, housing, arts districts, economic and community development, and sustainability, among others.

Participants in the closing interactive workshop, co-organized with The American Assembly, the Preservation Rightsizing Network, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Center for Community Progress, crafted a national action agenda for rethinking legacy city preservation. The national agenda will be released in December 2015. It will outline a collaborative vision for legacy city preservation to ensure that the rich built heritage of these cities remains an asset for current and future generations.
After 30 years of service to the college, the university and the region, Edward (Ned) Hill retired as Dean of the Levin College at the end of June 2015. Not the retiring type, former Dean Hill moved to Columbus, where in September he began serving as Professor of Public Affairs & City & Regional Planning at the John Glenn College of Public Affairs at The Ohio State University.

Dean Hill is succeeded on an interim basis by Robert E. (Bob) Gleeson, who joined the College in 2014 as Professor and the Albert A. Levin Chair of Urban Studies and Public Service. “Ned’s influence on the College runs deep,” said Interim Dean Bob Gleeson. “I am flattered to be asked to serve in this role, and I look forward to the search for the College’s next leader. Ned played many key roles in improving the College and the university. That’s a legacy to be proud of, and it serves as a solid platform for moving forward.”

Following Cleveland State University’s tradition, the President has asked Craig Boise, Dean of the Cleveland Marshal School of Law, to chair the Dean’s search committee. Included on the committee is Levin College Senior Fellow, Senator George Voinovich, whose office in the College is rarely empty as he finishes writing his much-anticipated book on public-private partnerships.