APA NY Metro Chapter

The American Planning Association’s New York Metro Chapter (APA-NYM) supports our members, local communities, schools, and practicing professionals through advocating for good planning practice, hosting diverse events and facilitating professional development opportunities in the New York Metro Area.

www.nyplanning.org

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New York City
Long Island
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Hudson Valley West
The 2020 calendar year was far from what I anticipated as I completed my second and final term as your Chapter President, but I am proud of the ways in which we adapted as a Chapter over the course of the year. In the face of unprecedented challenges brought about by COVID-19 and the corresponding mandate of social distancing, our Chapter pivoted in real time to provide a wide range of opportunities for professional development, networking, and advocacy through a robust set of virtual programs. As in prior years, our accomplishments as a Chapter were enabled by the spirit of volunteerism among our members and our commitment to building partnerships in the region.

This 2020 Annual Report includes updates from our Executive Committee and all Chapter Committees and Sections, and a few highlights from this year included the following:

• We jointly organized an APA Region 1 Chapter Webcast Series with our neighboring Chapters to provide timely and relevant virtual content to our members. Our Chapter's webcast was entitled "A Resilient NY Metro Area in the Face of Crisis: Best Practices & Lessons Learned for the Planning Profession." The session featured key takeaways from the NY Metro Area's responses to and recovery from a number of other crises over the past two decades—including September 11th and Hurricane Sandy—as we look ahead to the future. One of the themes that underpinned the session was that reflections on the past can in turn inform our region's approach to tackling the ongoing multifaceted challenges facing us today, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the associated economic downturn, and racial injustice.

• We continued building upon our well-established partnership with the NY Chapters of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and American Institute of Architects (AIA) to co-host the PlanScapeArch Conference. The 8th annual multi-disciplinary conference was virtual for the first time and sought to examine how current events have shaped public health, transportation, and technology, and how the allied professions can aid our communities in moving forward. A key theme that transcended all of the sessions was the relationship between geographic scale and the methods of practice used across our professions. Above all, the conference was anchored by a shared goal of elevating our professions, remaining relevant, and bringing out the best in each other by breaking down disciplinary silos.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Chapter President for the past four years. It has been one of the great honors of my career thus far to collaborate closely with our leadership team and build upon the work of past Chapter Presidents, including James Rausse, AICP, Donald Burns, AICP, and several others over the preceding decades who dedicated countless hours to advancing our mission. In looking ahead to 2021 and beyond, there is no one to whom I would rather pass the torch than Tiffany-Ann Taylor.

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American Planning Association
Update on National Initiatives

From April 29 - May 1, 2020, APA hosted NPC20 @ Home, which was a digital conference that brought the spirit of the National Planning Conference to the planning community. APA curated a collection of the most relevant NPC20 content, and added new programming that speaks to the unprecedented challenges planners are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program included keynotes, networking opportunities and virtual happy hours, and an additional day of career-focused content.

More than 5,000 planning professionals joined for NPC20 @ Home, and if you missed it, you can still get access to all of the session recordings in APA Learn, which is APA’s online education platform that launched in November 2018. APA Learn features over 600 courses (offering 500+ AICP CM credits) and seamless integration with CM logging, including enhanced search for CM-eligible courses. For more information about this affordable-priced, top-quality education option, visit https://www.planning.org/apalearn/.

Similar to 2020, and due to the ongoing pandemic and COVID-19 public gathering restrictions, the format and locale for the 2021 National Planning Conference will also be fully digital, from May 5-7, 2021. The NPC21 program will be immersive, energizing, and empowering. Preparing you to anticipate and successfully adapt to the needs of today’s rapidly-changing world, the program will be built on six core areas: addressing a legacy of inequality; COVID recovery and reinvention; emerging transportation and infrastructure; leveraging rapid technological changes; planning practice innovation; and resilient planning in a changing climate.

For more information, visit https://www.planning.org/ncp21/conference/.

Over the course of 2020, APA also provided a wide range of additional benefits to members, building upon a combination of long-standing programs as well as relatively new initiatives. These offerings included—but were not limited to—the following:

• The annual Policy and Advocacy Conference, culminating in Planners’ Day on Capitol Hill (both of which were virtual in 2020), which offers attendees the unique opportunity to meet with congressional representatives and staff to discuss planning issues and funding for critical planning programs.
• Celebration of the theme “Planning is Essential to Recovery” in October, for National Community Planning Month.
• Topic-based, geography-based, and population-based work led by APA’s 22 Divisions.
• The Planners Advocacy Network (PAN), which offers members an opportunity to shape APA’s policy and advocacy work, receive regular policy updates, and gain access to exclusive tips, training, and advocacy tools.
• An annual slate of legislative priorities—in conjunction with ongoing work to publish policy guides and issue policy statements—in support of the mission to create stronger, more just communities.
• Initiatives of the APA Foundation, whose mission is to advance the art and science of planning through philanthropic activities that provide access to educational opportunities, enrich the public dialogue about planning, and advance social equity in the profession and in our communities.
• The Ambassador Program, which aims to advance the public understanding of planning and the profession through activities and events in local communities.
• The AICP Candidate Pilot Program, which offers planners the ability to take the AICP exam prior to earning the professional planning experience, thereby providing a path to start earlier to achieve the designation.

• New resources in the Research KnowledgeBase collection, new reports issued by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), and free online access to the APA Library E-Book Collection.
• Applied research work coming out of APA’s Green Communities Center, Hazards Planning Center, and Planning and Community Health Center.
• Multi-media communications, including APA’s award-winning weekly e-newsletter Interact, digital and hardcopy versions of Planning Magazine, an APA podcast as an audio resource, and the quarterly Journal of the American Planning Association.

Additionally, APA membership continues to be free for any student actively enrolled or matriculated in any university or college degree program, and new members can join the APA at a savings of up to 85 percent a year, for up to two years. For more information, visit https://www.planning.org/membership/.

Best, Max
Maxwell L. Sokol, AICP
President
American Planning Association
New York Metro Chapter

While this past year was front of mind, I also must find myself reflecting on the many highlights of the past four years during my tenure as Chapter President, none of which would have been possible without the leadership and contributions of our Executive Committee, subject matter Committees, and geographic Sections.

In addition to our premier annual events noted above, we offered dozens of other opportunities over the past four years for our members to obtain AICP Certification Maintenance (CM) credits through panel discussions, mobile workshops, and other session formats. Our focus on preparing the next generation of planning leaders has remained a key priority for the Chapter through such initiatives as the Mentorship Program, Student Studio Showcase, AICP “What to Expect” session, youth planning education, and the Arthur Kuntz Memorial Scholarships, in addition to making donations to support the APA Foundation and providing input to the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) in the review process of graduate planning programs in our Chapter geography. We also participated in an award-winning Planners4Health Task Force, launched a new Technology Committee, and represented the Chapter at the annual APA National Delegate Assembly and State Legislative Summit.

Also over the past four years, we co-hosted a memorable reception during the National Planning Conference at the New York Public Library, celebrated the designations of multiple Great Places in America, and supported the nominations of several Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners (FAICPs), just to name a few of the ways in which our Chapter, our communities, and our members have been in the national spotlight. Last year, our Chapter’s DivComm was presented with an award by the APA Chapter Presidents Council for promoting “Outstanding Service to Members,” and I could not agree more with this national recognition.

In retrospect, our Chapter and the communities we serve, as well as our entire nation, have changed considerably over the past four years. What has remained constant is the dedication of those who represent the Chapter, even as our Chapter leadership team has evolved from all 47 Chapters around the country. Beyond the financial support for Hindsight, this was a powerful statement about the ways in which our Chapter’s DivComm is viewed as a leader not only by me and those within the 14 countries that comprise our Chapter, but also throughout the entire nation.

Committee in continuing to drive our Chapter forward.

With many thanks for the honor of serving as your Chapter President, I look forward to supporting Tiffany and the incoming Executive and I firmly believe that she is uniquely qualified to lead our Chapter into the future.

Tiffany has been instrumental in co-founding, organizing, and executing the Hindsight Conference and overseeing the annual work scholarships, in addition to making donations to support the APA Foundation and providing input to the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) in the review process of graduate planning programs in our Chapter geography. We also participated in an award-winning Planners4Health Task Force, launched a new Technology Committee, and represented the Chapter at the annual APA National Delegate Assembly and State Legislative Summit.

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In retrospect, our Chapter and the communities we serve, as well as our entire nation, have changed considerably over the past four years. What has remained constant is the dedication of those who represent the Chapter, even as our Chapter leadership team has evolved during this time. I am deeply grateful to all of our members who have individually and collectively made it possible for us to thrive as a Chapter, and I have great optimism and enthusiasm about the next era for our Chapter, which will be led by incoming President Tiffany-Ann Taylor.

Tiffany is a natural leader – she is charismatic, confident, a team player, and leads by example. As the outgoing Co-Chair of DivComm, Tiffany has been instrumental in co-founding, organizing, and executing the Hindsight Conference and overseeing the annual work program of DivComm in collaboration with the broader leadership team. Tiffany is a friend, colleague, and source of inspiration for me, and I firmly believe that she is uniquely qualified to lead our Chapter into the future.

With many thanks for the honor of serving as your Chapter President, I look forward to supporting Tiffany and the incoming Executive Committee in continuing to drive our Chapter forward.

Best, Max
Maxwell L. Sokol, AICP
President
American Planning Association
New York Metro Chapter

• Our Annual Chapter Conference was a fully virtual event that underscored the theme of this year’s National Community Planning Month, namely that “Planning is Essential to Recovery.” In addition to offering content across a wide range of subject matter areas within the planning profession, the two-day Chapter Conference also featured sessions focused specifically on adapting to the challenges brought about by COVID-19, including efforts related to public outreach, transit and mobility, scenario planning, and workforce development, among others. Overall, the Chapter Conference featured a multi-day program with a dynamic set of sessions, anchored by riveting keynotes and our annual awards ceremony to celebrate exemplary planners and projects in the region.

• Our Chapter’s award-winning Diversity Committee (DivComm) continued to garner national attention with the fourth annual Hindsight Conference. This year’s virtual Hindsight Conference, which drew a record-setting 1,000 registrants and showcased 27 sessions and nine digital exhibits, called on planners and policymakers to center racial justice in our understanding of health and the environment. On a personal note, I was delighted that the APA Chapter Presidents Council offered a conference registration to the President or designee from all 47 Chapters around the country. Beyond the financial support for Hindsight, this was a powerful statement about the ways in which our Chapter’s DivComm is viewed as a leader not only by me and those within the 14 countries that comprise our Chapter, but also throughout the entire nation.

• The annual Policy and Advocacy Conference, culminating in Planners’ Day on Capitol Hill (both of which were virtual in 2020), which offers attendees the unique opportunity to meet with congressional representatives and staff to discuss planning issues and funding for critical planning programs.
• Celebration of the theme “Planning is Essential to Recovery” in October, for National Community Planning Month.
American Planning Association Leadership

APA is governed by its Board of Directors, who are elected from among the membership of the Association. The Board is chaired by the APA President, and sets broad policy for the Association and governs its affairs. The AICP Commission is the eight-member governing body of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Members include a President, a President-Elect or an Immediate Past President, and six Commissioners.

Kurt E. Christiansen, FAICP APA President

Kurt Christiansen is the former economic and community development director for Azusa, California. He is a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners and holds a master's degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a bachelor's degree from California State University, Northridge. Christiansen has been an active member of APA serving in various local and national leadership roles including as the Region VI Board director, Chapter Presidents Council vice chair, and president of the APA California Chapter. He has also encouraged new planners by serving as a mentor.

Courtenay D. Mercer, FAICP PP Director Elected from Region I

Courtenay Mercer is serving her second four-year term on the American Planning Association board and is the board's treasurer. She is principal of Mercer Planning Associates, a boutique planning firm specializing in community engagement and economic development. She formerly served as the director of planning at the NJ Office of Smart Growth and the NJ director of the Regional Plan Association. She holds master's and bachelor's degrees from Rutgers University. Within APA, Mercer has served as a member on the Budget and Development Plan Committee, Legislative and Policy Committee, and chair of the Membership Committee. She also previously served as the APA New Jersey Chapter president and as treasurer of the APA Chapter Presidents Council.

Deborah Alaimo Lawlor, FAICP PP AICP President

Debbie Alaimo Lawlor has over 35 years of experience, specializing in land use and environmental planning. She is discipline leader for planning services for Maser Consulting, PA, where she manages a team of 10 planners. Previously, she worked for the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission. Lawlor has held leadership positions in APA's Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division and APNs New Jersey Chapter, which honored her in 2009 with its distinguished service award. She holds a BS in environmental planning and design and an MA in geography, both from Rutgers University.

Justin Garrett Moore, AICP, AICP Commissioner Elected from Region I

Justin Garrett Moore, AICP, is an urban designer and the executive director of the NYC Public Design Commission. He has extensive experience in urban planning, design and arts initiatives, and is focused on prioritizing quality and excellence for the public realm, and fostering accessibility, diversity, and inclusion in public buildings, spaces, and art. Moore is also a member of the Urban Design Forum and Next City's Vanguard, and teaches at Columbia University GSAPP's urban planning, design and planning programs. He is also the co-founder of Urban Patch, a social enterprise that focuses on community revitalization and design in American inner cities.

The NY Metro Chapter extends our well wishes to Leo R. Asuncion, Jr., AICP, and Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP, as they begin their roles as APA President and AICP President, respectively.

NY Metro Chapter Executive Committee

The APA New York Metro Chapter is served by an Executive Committee of 13 voting members, as well as the Immediate Past President and Chair of the Young Planners Group as non-voting members.

President
Maxwell Sokol, AICP

Immediate Past President
James Rausse, AICP

Chapter Secretary
James Rigert

Chapter Treasurer
Jackson Chabot

Professional Development Officer/VP of Professional Development
Alex Wallach, AICP

VP Committees
Matthew Cunningham, AICP

VP Communications
Ela Dokonal, AICP CUD, LEED AP

VP Intergovernmental Affairs
Shachi Pandey, AICP LEED AP

VP Programs
Holly Chase, AICP

Long Island Section Representative
Sean Sallie, AICP

Lower Hudson Valley East Section Representative
Peter Feroe, AICP

Lower Hudson Valley West Section Representative
Heather Jacksy, AICP

New York City Section Representative
Scott Grimm-Lyon, AICP

Student Representative Committee (SRC) Chair
Brenna Hemmings

Young Planners Group (YPG) Chair
Caroline Peri

Jackson Chabot

VP Programs
Holly Chase, AICP

Long Island Section Representative
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Student Representative Committee (SRC) Chair
Brenna Hemmings

Young Planners Group (YPG) Chair
Caroline Peri

Jackson Chabot
James Rigert
Chapter Secretary

The Chapter Secretary position plays a critical role in fostering communication within the Chapter as well as diligence through proper management and utilization of important records. During his second year serving as Chapter Secretary, James Rigert worked closely with the VP of Communications and other members of the Executive Committee to ensure the Chapter stayed organized and had a clear vision of what the Chapter wanted to achieve.

Over the past year, Mr. Rigert’s duties included:
• Preparing accurate meeting minutes and documenting Chapter decisions;
• Managing the Chapter’s lists of Committees, Committee members and Chapter members;
• Maintaining and managing the Chapter’s records and archives;
• Assisting with organizing Chapter meetings, events and conferences; and
• Facilitating the preparation of the Chapter’s Annual Report.

For the upcoming year, Mr. Rigert would like to continue making strides towards organizing the Chapter’s archives, build upon the Chapter’s current file management system to handle documents, and continue working closely with the Chapter President and the VP of Communications to make advancements to the NYM Chapter website.

Words can only begin to express how tumultuous 2020 has been. For many of us, this is one of the most unprecedented years of our existence. The global COVID-19 pandemic and the movement for racial justice continue to have widespread ramifications. Both have reached into all facets of people’s lives, the planning profession, and the communities we plan with. The pandemic has laid bare the existing health, economic, and other systemic inequities. As it concerns the treasurer position, the financial considerations are always at the forefront.

The Chapter’s budget and expenditures in 2020 are summarized in the charts that accompany this text. Many pivots and adaptations were necessary as the COVID pandemic reached the New York City Metro area in March and continues. Since March, all events and programming have either been canceled or have been virtual. This has significantly reduced expenditures for events and changed the way the Chapter has operated. With that in mind, we are very happy to report that the vast majority of our budget was dedicated to Chapter programs and Sections/Committees to support our members including the Chapter Conference and the Hindsight Conference.

The updates from the Vice Presidents and Section Representatives in this Annual Report highlight the Chapter’s initiatives, events, and professional development activities throughout this past year.

There are many successes to highlight but one specifically originated from the Treasurer, Jackson Chabot. Conceived in 2019, this year the Chapter awarded its first ever all expenses paid scholarship to the Annual APA National Conference. Prior to the pandemic, the intention was to provide two awardees, a student at one of our member schools and an emerging professional. However, the plan had to be adapted when the conference was moved online due to the pandemic. We would like to congratulate Savannah Wu of Columbia University and Dora Miketa of Sam Schwartz as this year’s recipients. We hope to continue this effort next year to support emerging leaders in the planning profession.

We are deeply grateful to all of the new and returning sponsors that are generously supporting the Chapter during this turbulent year. Their support during these tough economic times will ensure the Chapter can provide valuable professional development and programming to the planning community. A deep gratitude and a special thanks goes to Anastassia Fisyak, Emily Ahn Levy, and Ebony Wiggins from the Diversity Community for their time, energy, and efforts to fundraise and secure new sponsors.

Looking forward, the 2021 budget will be a collaborative effort developed with the incoming Executive Committee. The budget will continue to reflect the Chapter’s mission, deepen the Chapter’s commitment to equity, and movement/progress towards being anti-racist. Similarly, in 2021, many ongoing projects will continue to strengthen and solidify the Chapter’s long-term financial stability such as our efforts regarding 501C3 status and having a Chapter CPA.
Online testing in your home or location of your choice is now available! If you prefer to not test in person or there are no locations open in your area, you may take the AICP exam online. Prometric proctors will oversee all AICP exams remotely. Online testing technical requirements are available (planning.org/certification/register/faq). You may also review requirements in the ProProctor User Guide on the APA Website and run a system check with Prometric.

Proposed Changes to the CM Program

As noted on the APA website, AICP certification is rooted in a solid foundation that represents knowledge, experience, ethics, and leadership. It serves as an important tool to help planners make an impact in their work.

To ensure the certification continues to be relevant to the needs of today’s planners and today’s communities, the Certification Maintenance program is being updated. This update prioritizes two new mandatory topics identified by the AICP Commission as critical knowledge areas for planners to be prepared to best serve their communities. The criteria for education that meets the new topics was developed by subject matter expert task forces and is being shared with CM Providers to ensure education will be available on the new topics.

Beginning January 1, 2022, AICP members will be able to start logging two new mandatory credits in addition to Law and Ethics. One of the new mandatory credits is Equity, which will help planners build their skills in an area that is of pressing importance and lasting concern to communities across the country.

AICP Candidate Program

Under the AICP Candidate Program, eligible students and recent graduates of accredited planning schools can now start earning credits on the path to AICP by taking the AICP exam fresh out of school while they’re still in the academic mind frame. Passing the exam as a recent grad distinguishes themselves to professional colleagues and potential employers; and candidates can use the “AICP Candidate” designation on business cards, resume, etc. To put your planning career on the fast track, visit www.planning.org/aicp/candidate for more information on the AICP candidate program.

Share your ideas

If you have ideas for how the Chapter can support emerging and practicing professionals through certification and education development, please reach out to Alex J. Wallach (pdo@nyplanning.org).

Congratulations to our new AICP Members!

Summer 2020 AICP Members:
Christopher Campbell, AICP
J-Hyun Jeong, AICP
Christopher Law, AICP
Dorothy Mauskauand, AICP
Tara Mei Smith, AICP
Daniel Varea, AICP

November 2020 AICP Members:
Anne-Buggy, AICP
Michael Colton, AICP
Ithita Gaur, AICP
Anjali Goldberg, AICP
Lauren Hamid-Shapiro, AICP
Matthew Katz, AICP
Jennifer Kim, AICP
Christopher Lee, AICP

Additionally, congratulations to our new AICP Candidates!

Summer 2020 AICP Candidates:
Tylor Peters, AICP Candidate
Pauline Caramunt Torche, AICP Candidate
Michael Zapata, AICP Candidate
Kaiqi Zhang, AICP Candidate

November 2020 AICP Candidates:
Kaitlyn Coleman, AICP Candidate
Laura Davis, AICP Candidate
Teun Deuling, AICP Candidate
Maria Free, AICP Candidate
Jennifer Gutierrez, AICP Candidate
Marguerite Koehler, AICP Candidate

Matthew Cunningham, AICP

As it was for everyone, 2020 was a challenging year for the APA-NYM Chapter Committees. Many events had to be cancelled or reconfigured at the last moment, and some traditional events had a much different look and feel this year. However, the ingenuity and hard work of the Chapter’s Committee leaders and members was evident throughout the year as they developed new and creative ways to connect with and serve Chapter members and the broader community.

Through the difficulties of this past year, Committees conducted award-winning youth engagement, formed partnerships with planners across the country and abroad, held virtual meet-ups, created a blog series, and addressed issues such as racism, public health, mobility, advocacy and outreach, neighborhood rezonings, the wide range of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, and many more. In particular, a focus on how equity and social justice are core to all facets of planning have rightfully been an increased focus of Committee discourse and events.

I want to thank all of the Chapter Committee leaders and volunteers for the extraordinary effort they put forth this past year. The Chapter is deeply appreciative of the work the Committees have accomplished, and I’ve been impressed with their resilience and achievements, as I’m sure you will be too as you read the Committee recaps below. If you are interested in getting involved with or learning more about the Chapter Committees, please visit our website for more information (www.nyplanning.org/committees).

2020 highlights:
Awards Committee

The Awards Committee identifies Annual Chapter Award recipients, and looks for candidates with excellence in the practice of planning in the New York Metro area. See the full list of 2020 award recipients at the end of this report, which lists of 2020 award recipients at the end of this report, which included the Chapter’s virtual Annual Conference and the Dissertation Awards Committee. Many events had to be cancelled or reconfigured at the last moment, and some traditional events had a much different look and feel this year. However, the ingenuity and hard work of the Chapter’s Committee leaders and members was evident throughout the year as they developed new and creative ways to connect with and serve Chapter members and the broader community.

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Diversity Committee

The Diversity Committee (DivComm) entered yet another busy and successful year, transitioning its monthly meetings to hold safe space virtually after the start of quarantine, as well as planning for the 2020 Hindsight Conference.

Promoting more equitable planning practice

Since last year’s annual report, DivComm ran its Third Annual Hindsight Conference in 2019, an all-day conference centralizing social equity in planning, which gathered over 600 participants from across the country for 25 dynamic sessions, and interactive exhibits. The theme for the 2019 conference was Erasure, Remembrance, and Healing, commemorating multiple anniversaries including 400 years of slavery in the U.S., 100 years since the Red Summer, and 50 years since the Stonewall Riots. This all-volunteer organized conference featured different sessions selected through a competitive Request for Session Proposals—all centralizing equity in planning and giving a platform to diverse and underrepresented voices. In order to maintain time at monthly meetings for safe space hour, DivComm created a separate Hindsight Conference planning sub-Committee, made up of 35+ volunteers, to organize the fourth annual conference in 2020. The 2020 conference was held virtually on November 12th-13th, with the theme Our Health, Our Future. Visit the Conference website (hindsightcon.com) for more info.

Training the next generation of planners

Throughout the year, the Committee continues to be active with youth in planning workshops, leading interactive activities with middle and high-schoolers exploring urban planning and their impact on communities. In Fall 2019 youth engagement coordinators Daphne Lundi and Kate Selden developed the Future Cities Project, a collaboration between the Octavia Project, Pratt Center for Community Development, and DivComm. The Octavia Project is a summer program for girls and gender non-conforming teens, that uses the lens of science fiction to introduce young people to computer science, architecture and urban planning, and creative writing. Funded by a Taconic Fellowship Grant, teen fellows worked with urban planners from Pratt Center and DivComm, and educators from the Octavia Project, to co-create an engaging curriculum of activities, workshops and games to teach young people about the most pressing urban issues. Over the course of 6 months, fellows learned about urban planning concepts and prototyped new games that cover a range of issues from housing affordability and tenant rights, to transit and neighborhood cultural history.

Hindsight 2020 Keynote Panel on Erasure, Remembrance, and Healing

Above: Moments from Hindsight 2020

Hindsight 2020 organizing Committee

Future Cities Fellows touring the Undesign the Redline exhibit in Gowanus Brooklyn

Fellows discussed their urban planning game prototypes with a panel of planning experts in transit, sustainability, affordable housing, and immigrant community needs

Building upon the success of last year’s cohort, the Youth & Planning team, again with DivComm’s Nate Heffron serving as their advisor with the assistance of numerous other DivComm volunteers, began another exciting project with a new cohort of ELLIS interns in July. This year’s project began with a series of virtual urban planning workshops and benefits from the leadership of two returning seniors from last year’s project. The group chose to create a plan for the Kingsbridge Armory building in the Northwest Bronx. Their community-driven plan conducted a survey and held a series of virtual charrette sessions in September. They are designing a 3d model of the Armory in Minecraft that will incorporate the comments they’ve heard in their outreach.

The ELLIS students were also able to attend several virtual field trips to observe the variety of sectors and organizations that do urban planning. DivComm members also participate as guests in their weekly project check in calls to provide guidance and advice on their project. They again presented their work at the Hindsight Conference.

Last year’s very successful urban planning interns from the ELLIS Academy continued to share their Bx9 Bus Improvement project with various agencies. Following their popular exhibit at the Hindsight Conference (see below), the group presented their model to NYCEDC and had plans to share with NYC DOT when the pandemic struck. They were still honored with a virtual reception dinner in June 2020 to commemorate their work along the DivComm volunteers that assisted them throughout their project. The students were also the recipients of the APANYM William H. Whyte Award for Creativity and Ingenuity in Planning for their project at the 2020 Chapter Conference.
Increasing the visibility of underrepresented planners
In the spring at the start of quarantine, the Communications team at DivComm launched a member profiles series on Instagram to increase the visibility of planners who identify as people of color, queer, trans, and more. Check out the series on Instagram (instagram.com/divcomm)

A statement calling for planners to stand with Black lives
At the wake of recent waves of police brutality and killing of Black lives, DivComm leadership wrote a statement calling on the communities of planning, design, and policy professionals to stand with Black lives and take action. The statement highlighted planners’ responsibility to correct historical and ongoing discriminatory and predatory practices, and ensure that Black and Brown communities not only survive, but thrive. The statement was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee to be adopted as the official statement to thrive. The statement was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee to be adopted as the official statement.

Cultivating safe space and community
Continuing to meet monthly, DivComm leadership have been striving to be more intentional in the balance of organizing and hosting educational events, while fostering a safe space and building a community for planners that identify as people of color, women, LGBTQ, and other underrepresented identities. The year of 2019 concluded with an annual holiday potluck and gift exchange. Adjusting to safety guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic, community building events continued in 2020 in a virtual setting. Virtual events included viewing parties, general check-ins and conversation, online fitness classes, and a meditation session.

To express your interest in supporting DivComm’s initiatives, please email DivComm (diversity@nyplanning.org) for more information.

Economic Development Committee
Under the leadership of Co-Chairs Chisato Shimada and Jo-Sar Davis-Dacio, the mission of the Committee is to promote and increase the understanding of economic development, as it is a critical element of planning. One of the key events for the Committee in 2020 was our New York City Roundtable event "COVID-19 impacts on the Retail/Restaurant Industries" where we discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic continues to weigh heavily on the economy of the United States. State and local jurisdictions are challenged dealing with the economic consequences, without help from the federal government. New York City’s retail and restaurant industries have deployed creative strategies to stay open during this period, while the City explores long-term borrowing options to fund critical government operations and projects. The APA NY Metro Chapter’s Economic Development Committee has brought together a range of experts to provide insight on the economic toll the virus has inflicted on the City and what lies ahead in the struggle for recovery. For the upcoming year, we intend to continue our topical events by hosting professional forums (via zoom) and virtual-tours throughout the New York Metro region.

In addition, we host monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of the month to discuss new economic development topics and potential urban planning events that will attract new members and spur interest in topics related to the NY Metro area, no matter how large or small the potential economic impact. In the past, the Committee has also provided suggestions to policymakers when members convey passion in a particular topic, and recently a lot of our focus has been COVID-related policy. Last year, our Committee created the first Economic Development Roundtable event, which has been a recurring event featuring timely topics, issues, and trends in economic development – so stay tuned for our next round table event!

Chapter members who are interested in participating in the relationship between economic development and planning are encouraged to join the Committee. Please email us at economicdevelopment@nyplanning.org for more information.

Environmental Committee
As with many professional groups, 2020 has been a challenging year for the Environmental Committee. However, there continues to be Chapter interest in the Committee and the core group of the Metro Chapter Environmental Committee is hopeful we can return to a more regular meeting schedule in 2021 where we typically discuss issues, policies, and programs related to environmental planning in New York City and the broader NY Metro region. Over the past year, members of the Committee have participated in online events with the New York Water and Environment Association Watershed Committee annual conference and the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter.

As an example of the types of events we like to organize, in July 2019 the Committee led a tour of the Saw Mill Creek Wetland Mitigation Bank Project on Staten Island with representatives from the City’s Economic Development Corporation and designers involved in that restoration project. The Committee has also participated in the APA-NY Mentorship events and collaborates with other Committees on events and Chapter activities.

The Committee is also always looking for new members. If you are interested in joining the Committee, please contact Robert White or Aldo Treville (environmental@nyplanning.org) to get involved.

Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Committee (HNRC)

HNRC continued its several-year focus on neighborhood preservation, equity issues, advocating for a comprehensive planning framework for New York City and climate change mitigation. HNRC continued cooperation with the Municipal Art Society to provide planning related walking tours that had to be cancelled due to Covid.

HNRC organized a panel discussion, “Let’s Talk about Neighborhood Rezonings” with representatives from the Association for Neighborhood Housing Developers, the Municipal Arts Society, and local planners to discuss the issues in the local rezonings. The event had to be cancelled due to COVID but will be rescheduled virtually in the near future.

HNRC with the APA NY Metro Chapter Executive Committee sponsored an international two-part seminar with PLANRED, a burgeoning Chilean planners network and the APA California Northern Section, “COVID Conversations: Checking Cities in Uncertain Times.”

The first panel, “Government and Community Responses to Socioeconomic and Environmental Injustice Highlighted by the COVID Pandemic” presented summaries of how Italy, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Germany and California dealt with the COVID pandemic, followed by a discussion of the impacts and local governance in response to COVID in New York. The second panel, “Enhancing Resiliency and Sustainability in
To get involved in the Technology Committee, please email us at shubham@nyplanning.org and Olivia Jovine, AICP.

Shaven Wu, Mariya Chekmarova, Tiera Mack, Shruti who are independently volunteering their time with the NTAs within the digital divide and the compounding effects identifies New York City Neighborhood Tabulation Areas working on an equity-focused research project. The research through the lens of technology, the Committee is currently Reinforcing the Committee’s commitment to exploring equity discussion.

interest with each talk seeing over 30 virtual participants per community gathering, the series has garnered a lot of to machine learning. The Tech Talks were originally hosted hosted five total Tech Talks ranging in topic from open data technology in planning. Since January, the Committee has produced many fruitful discussions around the role of Committee’s on-going activities.

Outbreak altered Committee plans and set the stage for the events. A year later, in March of 2020, the Coronavirus formed Committee, topics of interest, and potential future planners and technologists to discuss goals for the newly

The Technology Committee kicked off in March of 2019 with a successful happy hour launch event, bringing together planners and technologists to discuss goals for the newly formed Committee, topics of interest, and potential future events. A year later, in March of 2020, the Coronavirus outbreak altered Committee plans and set the stage for the Committee’s ongoing activities.

The Committee’s “Tech Talk” series was launched and has produced many fruitful discussions around the role of technology in planning. Since January, the Committee has hosted five total Tech Talks ranging in topic from open data to machine learning. The Tech Talks were originally hosted in-person, but transitioned to a virtual series after March. Although the platform has shifted away from an in-person community gathering, the series has garnered a lot of interest with each talk seeing over 30 virtual participants per discussion.

Reinforcing the Committee’s commitment to exploring equity through the lens of technology, the Committee is currently working on an equity-focused research project. The research identifies New York City Neighborhood Tabulation Areas (NTAs) within the digital divide and the compounding effects of the Coronavirus on these communities. The working group is composed of the following five Committee members, who are independently volunteering their time with the project: Savannah Wu, Mariya Chekmarova, Tierra Mack, Shruti Shubham, and Olivia Jovine, AICP.

To get involved in the Technology Committee, please email us at technology@nyplanning.org.

Two HNRC members are members of the APA National Legislative and Policy Committee that this year created the Climate Change Policy Guide, reviewed the Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide, and discussed assembling the Equitable Economic Development Guide.

The HNRC organized a panel discussion for the NY Metro Chapter Annual Conference this year—“Incorporating Sustainability in Planning: A Review of NYC and NYS Climate Legislation”—that presented and discussed New York State and City groundbreaking climate legislation, the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and the Climate Mobilization Act. This follows up on the NY Metro Chapter’s professional dialogue, “Sustainability Among the Sides: Changes to Planning Practice to Meet the Challenges of Future Sustainability” from 2019. HNRC plans to engage other Chapter Committees in conversations about how the planning profession can further the carbon reduction goals of 80-85% reductions from 2005 levels by 2050.

To get involved in the work of the HNRC, please email housing@nyplanning.org for more information.

Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee had another successful year hosting AICP CM events and informal events, as well as partnering with other transportation-related organizations.

Committee leadership consisted of Dorottya Miketa, AICP, PP and Katherine Radin, AICP (Co-Chairs), Stephanie Shellroe, AICP (Events Coordinator), Gloria Campbell (Communications Lead), and Christopher Lee (Researcher).

2020 highlights include:

• Lost in Translation: Decoding Unexpected Language Barriers between Transportation, Advocacy, and Main Street: Partnered with the nonprofit Project for Public Spaces to host a CM roundtable discussion in January. The event focused on Project for Public Spaces’ informative new toolkit which is aimed at helping planning practitioners communicate with communities to create great Main Streets.

• Committee Open Meeting: Held an open meeting in February to discuss the Committee’s objectives and engage new and returning members.

• Transportation Trivia: Partnered with the Greater New York Chapter of Women’s Transportation Seminar (WTS) and the Young Professionals in Transportation (YPT), to hold the annual Transportation Trivia Night in September. For the first time ever, this year’s Trivia Night was hosted virtually and the recommended registration fee for the event was donated to local transportation-related nonprofits chosen by the winning teams. The event raised over $300 for the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance and Bike New York.

• PARK(ing) Day: Supported ASLA NY as a co-sponsor of Parking Day 2020 (September 17th) on West End Avenue between 88th and 94th Streets. This year the programming extended for the entirety of the five blocks, not just in the parking spaces!

• Planning for Mobility Justice: Co-sponsored a CM panel with the nonprofit Open Plans in October that explored strategies for achieving justice and equity through transportation planning. The panel discussed the various tools that planners, designers, and policy-makers can use to ensure all communities achieve mobility justice.

• Modes of the Future: Micromobility: hosted a CM event to ensure all communities achieve mobility justice.

• Transportation Committee Virtual Happy Hour, hosted on April 22nd 2020.

To get involved with the Transportation Committee or hear more about our upcoming activities, join our Facebook group or email us at transportation@nyplanning.org. We are always looking for feedback and ideas to expand our range of events, increase participation, and bring in new and diverse voices to continue the conversation around transportation in the New York Metro region.
Urban Design Committee (with Arts & Culture Sub-Committee)

The Urban Design Committee, led by Co-Chairs Greg Haley and Emory Lee AICP, ENV SP, MCP, has relied heavily on adaptive leadership and regular virtual Committee meetings in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic that began in early 2020. Despite a host of unforeseen challenges, the Committee continues to advance its mission of elevating the role of the planning profession in urban design. In addition to establishing three internal working groups (i.e., youth education, emerging firms, planning/urban design technical assistance), the Committee has also planned several virtual events and published a Spring and Fall blog series through the 'Voices of Urban Design' Medium platform.

Over the last year the Committee has begun hosting guests from the broader urban design and planning community for a portion of our Committee meetings, providing an opportunity for our guests to present aspects of their work and solicit input from the Committee, while adding to the knowledge and awareness of the Committee and inspiring robust conversation amongst the Committee members. Examples of guests hosted by the Committee over the past year include Suzanne Nienaber from the Center for Active Design and representatives of the Mayor’s Office and the Van Alen Institute who were interested in the Committee’s feedback on the Brooklyn Bridge competition that they sponsored. This year, Michael Samuelian joined one of our meetings to speak a bit about the new Urban Tech program at Cornell Tech.

Over the last year, the Committee has identified members for formalized roles within the Committee. Charlie Cunningham has taken on the role of Communications Manager for the Committee as well as responsibility for managing the Committee blog, “Voices of Urban Design”; Charlie and Emory collaborated to create a Spring 2020 interview blog series during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Charlie, Emory and other Committee members subsequently prepared a new series of posts published as part of the Fall 2020 series, including interviews with Michael Samuelian of Cornell Tech, Tiffany Ann-Taylor of the APA NYM Diversity Committee, Amina Hassen of WXY, Justin Garrett Moore of the NYC Public Design Commission and Sam Schwartz.

Renee Schoonbeeck has continued to represent the APA NY Metro Chapter and Urban Design Committee at the Fine Arts Federation, and Jillian Pagano of the Arts + Culture SubCommittee has functioned as the Committee Secretary, capturing meeting minutes for the bi-monthly Committee meetings. Since the beginning of 2020, the Committee met virtually six times (January, March, May, July, September, and November).

In the fall, Emory worked with Committee member Adriana Akers, Charlie Cunningham and April Schneider to organize a virtual event discussing Urban Design, Mobility and Equity. The event took place on 11/16 and was a panel discussion format. Additionally, Emory worked with Committee member Alice Shay and Sreoshy Banerjea, to organize the third event (virtual) in the “Emerging Firms” series, which took place on 1/10. The event was a panel discussion format with a brief presentation by Committee member Sreoshy Banerjea. Greg has continued to support the Committee through his role in a net-zero neighborhoods initiative undertaken with the Urban Design Committee of the AIA.

The Urban Design Committee has also continued to collaborate with the Arts & Culture SubCommittee. The Arts and Culture SubCommittee leadership consists of three co-chairs: Sam Smouha, Max Scoptepont, and Jillian Pagano. The Arts and Culture group also has had a busy year connecting to new partnering community-based organizations and non-profits that share our mission to engage in the ongoing arts and culture conversation supporting artists, artist housing affordability and the integration of arts and culture into traditional planning methods and government agencies. In late 2019 the Committee organized a private tour of art space on Governor’s Island in coordination with the Lower Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, and in the 2020 APA NY Metro Chapter Annual Conference, the SubCommittee helped develop the event “Strengthening the Region through Arts Planning”.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee was unable to organize and host any of the events planned for 2020. The Committee also did not organize or host any independent events open to the public, focusing instead on the Committee Blog as a means of engaging with the industry and as a tool to promote/educate the voices and perspectives of planners and urban designers during a global pandemic.

However, this said Committee members were still active in supporting or co-sponsoring other events outside of our core Committee efforts. For example, Greg Haley participated in organizing the 2020 Joint AIA/ASLA/APA NY conference, At Every Scale, and the Committee co-sponsored, organized AICP CM credits for, and helped promote a virtual workshop event with the Urban Design Committee of the AIA NY Chapter related to the ongoing development of the City’s new waterfront plan and focused on equity. Additionally, long-time Committee member, Sreoshy Banerjea collaborated with the Chapter’s Economic Development Committee on a panel event focused on safely reopening NYC’s waterfronts from COVID and spearheaded the development of a directory to connect designers and architects to small restaurant owners. Many members of the Committee also participated in workshops with the Center for Active Design to provide professional input to the new and expanded 2.0 version of the Active Design Guidelines.

To stay informed of the Committee’s activities, join our LinkedIn and/or Facebook groups or email us (urbandesign@nyplanning.org) to get involved! Visit our Voices of Urban Design Blog to hear diverse perspectives from today’s leading industry practitioners in the New York Metro area!

Waterfront Committee

The APA NY Metro Chapter Waterfront Committee is open to all and convenes meetings to discuss a diverse array of NYC waterfront issues and themes. Attendees at meetings often include a mixture of planners, students, landscape architects, and lawyers all coalescing over shared passions for waterfront planning, users and project implementation in NY. The Committee is always welcoming of new members. Please get involved and email the Committee Co-Chairs with any questions at waterfront@nyplanning.org.

Shachi Pandey, AICP, LEED AP

The Vice President of Intergovernmental Affairs is primarily responsible for advancing the planning agenda, policy action and priorities of the NY Metro area at the local, state and national level. The VP works closely with the entire Chapter Leadership Team including the Executive Committee and the Chairs of the Chapter’s topical committees—to coordinate and build consensus on policy issues.

Under the leadership of Shachi Pandey, the Chapter’s accomplishments in the policy arena in 2020 included but were not limited to the following:

- Continued focus from 2019 on a set of near-term and longer-term recommendations to inform the Chapter’s Development Plan, with the goals of improving visibility and communication, creating value for our members, and encouraging partnerships both within the Chapter and with external organizations;
- Participated in the Future Streets Initiative in collaboration with ASLA and AIA NY;
- Coordinated the Chapter’s participation in APA’s first Digital Delegate Assembly; and
- Represented the Chapter at the 2020 APA Digital State Legislative Summit.

In 2021, the Chapter looks to continue building upon the momentum from last year.

Holly Chase, AICP

VP Programs

The 2020 Annual Conference was a two-day virtual event held on October 15th and 16th. It featured twelve sessions exploring planning responses to COVID-19, race and planning, and community engagement, among other topics. The Chapter was thrilled to feature Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP (Commissioner, NYC Department of Parks & Recreation) and Maria Torres-Springer (VP of US Programs, Ford Foundation) as keynote speakers. Attendees were able to virtually network with one another via the conference platform, as well as interact with speakers through live chat and Q&A. The conference ended with a virtual awards ceremony, celebrating the best of the region’s planning work over the past year.

The collaborative effort of planning for and hosting the conference involved Executive Committee members, the Conference Planning Committee, the Sponsorship Committee, and the session organizers and their distinguished speakers. Special thanks to Chapter President Max Sokol, VP of Communications Ela Dokonal, Chapter Treasurer Jackson Chabot, and Professional Development Officer Alex Wallach.

Chapter members are reminded that ideas for programs, recommendations for speakers, and discussion topics are always welcome and should be sent to the VP of Programs at programs@nyplanning.org.

Volunteering to serve your professional organization is an excellent way to meet new people, learn about new topics, and know the inner workings of the organization—please get involved and volunteer.
Ela Dokonal, AICP CUD, LEED AP
VP of Communications

2020 had provided us with unprecedented challenges, and our Chapter shifted in real-time to provide messaging, content and a wide range of virtual programs and opportunities for our members.

Communications represents a crucial area for the Chapter’s operating procedures and finances, with an objective to define quantifiable metrics to evaluate our progress as we move forward. Our organization is uniquely positioned to promote the value of planning in consensus-building and decision-making, especially regarding vital socio-economic and environmental issues; our Chapter is one of the most dynamic regions of the country.

Daily, Ela is working with the Committees, Sections and fellow Executive Committee leaders to support their communication needs, managing communication outlets and supporting Chapter members and partnering organizations.

The major efforts are placed in the Chapter’s bi-weekly newsletter, with an increased audience of close to 3,400 members, and open-rate that exceeds expectations. The newsletter allows us to promote Chapter activities beyond our membership and therefore promote our organization and its value of seeing planning in action in other parts of the country.

The website provides links to social media platforms, and subscriptions to the Chapter’s newsletter. Please email Ela (communications@nyplanning.org) if you would like to get involved, or have any suggestions and questions.

For 2020, the APA-NYM was granted over 75,000 page views, a go-to-platform for planning jobs. Relying on the user-provided content, it allows our members and leadership to post events, advertise meetings, and post messages. Our job-posting board is the most visited page with daily postings, and we have an increased interest from municipalities to advertise RFPs and RFQs. The Consultant Directory page promotes our sponsors, and is a second most visited page.

The Chapter’s switch to Eventbrite ticket-purchase has affected the webpage visit-stats but improved user experience. In 2021, the focus will shift towards more focused integration of the website with our social media platforms.

As a member of the Chapter leadership, Ela will continue to discuss action-oriented next steps to maintain the momentum in 2020 and beyond.

Co-sponsored events and Section Collaboration
The Long Island Section has been awarding planning scholarships in Arthur H. Kunz’s memory. Arthur was a Long Island planner who was committed to preserving and enhancing Suffolk County by balancing its growth and development with environmental protection. He played an integral part in Suffolk County’s development for almost 30 years and worked for the Nassau County Planning Commission from 1958 to 1969. In 1969, he became Assistant Planning Director for the Suffolk County Department of Planning, and Director in 1989. Every year, eligible applicants are chosen among Long Island entry-level planners or students in a planning-related major. This year the Section awarded three scholarships to Long Island planners Julian Navarra, Sarah Singer and Jonathan Sokol. The scholarship covers the majority of expenses related to the conference registration, APA membership for one year for non-members, and some additional expenses. Mr. Kunz spent most APA conferences attending as many mobile workshops as possible and believed in the value of seeing planning in action in other parts of the country. Therefore, the scholarship stipulates participation in at least one mobile workshop and a short presentation at the Section’s Annual Memorial Scholarship Breakfast. Considering the ongoing pandemic, the Long Island Section Steering Committee offered the option for awardees to defer their award to next year to allow for an in-person Conference experience, if available.

LI Section Officers
Sean Sallie, AICP; Section Director
Kathy Eisenman, AICP; Treasurer
David Tepper, AICP; Secretary
West Sternberg, AICP; PDO

2020 Steering Committee Members
Kendra Armstead; Patti Bourne, AICP; Kyle Collins, AICP; Ela Dokonal, AICP CUD, LEED AP; Manwa Fawaz; Taylor Garner; Emily Humes; Tom Isles, AICP; Janice Jijina, AICP PE, LEED AP; Sarah Lansdale, AICP; Aryeh Lembenger, AICP; Jefferson Murphree, AICP; Maxwell Sokol, AICP; Wes Sternberg, AICP; David Viana; Alex Wallach, AICP; and Elissa Ward.

Thank you to the entire Steering Committee for your collaboration and volunteerism which allows the LI Section to continue to offer a wide range of events and programs to our members!
The Lower Hudson Valley East Section again proudly co-sponsored Pace University Land Use Law Center’s Annual Conference. The virtual event, held December 7-10, not only offered the ever-important CM credits, but, as usual, offered critical insights into our professional lives. This year, the conference delved deep into the history of planning’s role in segregating the country and offered timely commentary on how planning can help us emerge from the pandemic as a more equitable and sustainable society.

As was the case last year, the Section recognizes the need to broaden the geographic reach of its programs. Now that the “new normal” is here to stay, I encourage the Section’s members to reach out to me directly (hudsonvalleyeast@nyplanning.org) to discuss your thoughts on how the Chapter could play a role in the training, collaboration, and networking functions within your local and regional areas of practice. Our goal is to annually support events in, or catering to, the various geographies and practices within our Section.

Scott Grimm-Lyon
New York City
Section Representative

The New York City Section of the American Planning Association coordinates events to APA-NYM Chapter membership within the 5 boroughs of New York City.

Annual Chapter Holiday Party
It was not possible to host an in-person holiday party in 2020. In 2019, the NYC Section partnered with the Student Representative Committee (SRC) to co-host the Annual Holiday Party on Tuesday, December 10, at Turntable LP Bar & Restaurant on W. 32nd St. The festive event was attended by over 100 planners from across the region and included food, drinks, laughter, conversation, networking opportunities and karaoke.

Event Space
In the early part of 2020 APA-NYM continued to offer free event space in Lower Manhattan for Chapter Committees and Chapter members to host CM credit events. The NYC Section acts as the liaison between the venue and our members to make sure events are properly organized and run smoothly. Six events were hosted in the space between November 2019 and in early March 2020. During that time, the space facilitated meetings for three Committees, YPG, and an AICP prep session. The space facilitated 8 CM credit hours to be available to our members. Face to face events at LMHQ stopped in mid-March due to safety measures implemented in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Networking with Other Professional Organizations
Despite the pandemic, the NYC Section continued its tradition of helping to plan the annual PlanScapeArch Conference co-hosted by the APA NY Metro Chapter, American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) NY Chapter, and American Institute of Architects (AIA) NY Chapter.

This year’s conference was themed At Every Scale and was held as a virtual event on September 24th and September 25th, 2020. The multi-disciplinary conference examined how current events have shaped Public Health, Transportation, and Technology, and how our allied professions can aid our communities in moving forward.

To get more involved in the efforts of the NYC Section please contact nyc@nyplanning.org.
The Student Representative Committee (SRC) fosters an ongoing relationship among students at New York Metro area planning schools and the local and national American Planning Association (APA) Chapters. To fulfill that mission, the Committee acts as a liaison between students and the APA and coordinates events such as the annual Studio Presentations and inter-school conferences. SRC also partners with student organizations from their respective planning schools. In addition to hosting events for APA, SRC’s unique position with schools allows for greater opportunities to engage with planning students not necessarily involved with APA.

2019-2020 was an active year for SRC, with its ambitious event programming bisected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this public health crisis and the risk that in-person events would pose, all programming for Spring 2020 was virtual.

Fall Meet and Greet
To kick off programming for SRC 2019-2020, SRC hosted a Fall Meet and Greet at the Haymaker Bar and Kitchen near Penn Station. The meet and greet—pre-pandemic—drew more than 20 participants.

Volunteering at Chapter Annual Conference
During mid-October 2019, SRC members proved indispensable in recruiting volunteers for the NYM Chapter’s Annual Conference at the Scandinavia House. Responsibilities for the 18 volunteers ranged from operating the conference attendee check-in table and taking photos of the sessions to serving as timekeepers for the sessions.

Brenna Hemmings
Student Representative Committee Chair

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Facade

2018-2019 Academic Year Representatives
Chair: Brenna Hemmings
Columbia University: Lorraine Liao (2019), Savannah Wu (2020) and Regina Alcazar (2020)
CUNY Hunter College: Aleksander Miletic and Madeline Schoenfeld
New York University: Gretha Suarez, Kat Cotty (took over for Gretha) and Liz Park
Pratt Institute: Jacqueline Ting and April Hurley
Rutgers University: Teun Deuling (2019) and Nathan Satish (2020)

Lattes with Leaders
Organized by the Chapter’s SRC, Lattes with Leaders is an ongoing series of events with planning professionals employed in New York City. These events offer a chance for a small group of students to come together with a professional over coffee or tea in a casual setting to start a dialogue and learn from the experiences of leaders in the field. Graduate students from all planning programs across the New York Metro area are welcome to attend and these events are free for students.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the events took place via video conferencing. Additionally, SRC started a new initiative of Company Q&As, a type of programming that had to be retrofitted from the original plan of in-person Company Tours, focusing more on introducing participants to the organization as opposed to an individual’s education and career trajectory. The pivot to virtual programming allowed for more creativity in event programming (i.e., more opportunities to collaborate with student and professional organizations, especially if mutual meet-up locations caused complications before or individuals had busy agendas that presented issues in scheduling).

Ultimately, SRC members were able to host sessions with Olivia Jovine (formerly of Localize.city), NYCEDC, Karp Strategies, and Project for Public Spaces.

Urban Planning Post Graduation: A Conversation for Emerging Professionals
Joined by a group of planning professionals with different backgrounds and disciplines, SRC partnered with the Chapter’s Technology Committee and Young Planners Group to glean some career guidance and tips for graduate planning students in light of COVID.

As a result of the ongoing pandemic, the Annual Student Studio Showcase was cancelled for the 2019-2020 student year. This premier annual event will be revisited for the following year.
Co-Chairs
Young Planners Group
Caroline Peri and Jackson Chabot

The Young Planners Group (YPG) works to support young and emerging planning professionals in the region and connect these new professionals with the New York Metro Chapter and its Committees and Sections. Particularly during this challenging time for cities and connection, YPG welcomes new member voices and ideas for virtual engagement. In the year ahead, YPG looks forward to developing new programming and ways to connect members to one another and to the broader planning field, as well as strengthening the pipeline between student members and emerging professionals who engage with the Chapter prior to or immediately following enrollment in planning school.

Events & Programming
In May 2020, YPG helped to co-host and promote a virtual panel event titled “Urban Planning Post Graduation: A Conversation for Emerging Professionals.” Led by the Chapter’s Technology Committee and SRC, this event aimed to provide support for planning graduates entering the job market with recognition of the current pressures on the market due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event featured a panel of professionals who shared candid experiences and advice with current students and recent graduates, and offered guidance on breaking into the field and opportunities for growing a planning career.

In surveys and informal discussion, YPG members have expressed interest in additional networking opportunities, professional development and trainings, career pathway planning, and opportunities to connect socially with fellow planning professionals. Looking ahead, YPG is eager to develop programming that meets these needs and helps planners develop deeper partnerships and further their careers in the field.

Mentorship
The YPG Mentorship Subcommittee celebrated its 11th year of the program and led another successful round of the APA NY Metro Chapter Mentorship Program. This year’s Committee was chaired by Katie Shepard and Jack Nieman with Sera Tolgay and Brenna Hennings serving as Committee members. For the 2020 Mentorship Program, 15 mentor-mentee matches were made.

As in previous rounds of the program, the mentorship pairings were made based on the results of a brief but focused application process, including responses to a multiple choice and short answer-format survey as well as submittal of an updated resume. In forming the partnerships, the Subcommittee considered several factors, including areas of interest in the planning profession as well as preferred frequency and format of communication. The mentors comprised a wide range of senior and mid-level planners across a variety of specializations, and the mentees included mid-level and entry-level planners, as well as graduate students.

The Subcommittee hosted three events during the six-month program. These events included a kickoff event in April, a midpoint event in June, and a final event in September. The Committee also posted in the LinkedIn group and emailed the cohort about several upcoming events that participants were encouraged to attend together virtually.

The kickoff event was delayed one month due to the COVID outbreak and took place virtually on Zoom in April. During the kickoff event, an overview of the program was given, mentors and mentees introduced themselves to one another, and resources were shared about how to develop a strong mentoring relationship.

The midpoint event featured a great discussion on COVID response and recovery, presentations from a few program participants showcasing some of their planning work, and a discussion about equity in planning over Zoom. The wrap-up event featured a discussion about the program and ways to improve it next year from a virtual perspective. David Burgy spoke about ways to get involved in APA policy programs and groups. Caroline Ann Peri spoke about the Chapter’s YPG and how to get involved. Additionally, an overview was given of opportunities to get involved in other Committees in the Chapter.

The City

APA-NY Chapter
2020 Chapter Awards

Each year, the APA-NY Chapter bestows recognition on individuals, organizations, and projects that exemplify the best of the metropolitan region’s planning work. The awards are meant to highlight excellence in the field and inspire planners of the next generation. Join us to learn who are this year’s awardees in the following categories:

Lawrence M. Orton Award
Award for leadership in City and Regional Planning
Gene Norman

Andrew Haswell Green Award
Award to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions for a period of at least 15 years
Jessica Katz

Meritorious Service or Achievement Award
Award to recognize work of unusual merit
New Rochelle Strategic Investment Plan

Paul Davidoff Award
Award for Leadership in Housing or Equal Opportunity
RUPCO Energy Square – Kingston, NY

Robert Ponte Award
Award for for contribution of significant value to the vitality of the New York Area
Barika X. Williams

William H Whyte Award
Award for creativity and ingenuity in planning
ELLIS Prep Academy 8x9 Bus Improvement Study

Journalism Award
Award for leadership in print, broadcast, and web-based journalism
The City

Student Awards 17/18 Academic Year
Shiyu Ma, Columbia University
Michael Nicholas, Hunter College
Timna Gole, Pratt Institute
Benjamin Eskin, Rutgers University
Note: NYU did not issue a student award this year

Floyd Lapp Award
Award for service to the APA NY Metro Chapter
Gloria Lau

2020 Chapter Awards

Gloria Lau
Timna Gole, Pratt Institute
Michael Nicholas, Hunter College
Shiyu Ma, Columbia University
Barika X. Williams
Jessica Katz
Thank you

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