This semester's Capstone competitions were held over two days. Twenty students presented their final MRED work to fellow students, staff, and a panel of judges on Saturday, May 16th and Sunday, May 17th. Prizes of $1000, provided by the Colvin Institute. Second and third place prizes of $500 and $250 were provided by Monument Bank both days. Saturday’s judges were: Lisa Wiersma, Telesis, Washington, DC, Eric Posner from Tower Companies, Rockville, MD, Paul Rowe, SIMPRO, Washington, DC, and Van Anderson, Monument Bank, Bethesda, MD.
from left: Sebastian Dern, Benjamin Hobbs, and Tais Xavier

Saturday Capstone A winners were won first place for his community-based market, The Jonestown Marketplace, based in Baltimore. Tais Xavier won second place for her mixed-use development plan entitled 601 Lofts, based in the historic district of Baltimore, and Sebastian Dern won third place for his sustainable, mixed-use Green on Fourteen, located in the Columbia Heights neighborhood of Washington.

Capstone B from left: Mohammad Shiravand, Steven Donegan, Kristi Adams, Joseph McKay, Audra Shinnebarger, Ross Rabinovitch, and Brent Wensel

The students competing on Sunday, Capstone B, are shown above, as well as Kofi Minta and Seon Weems, not pictured. Judges for day two included Jennifer Farthing Mihm of Urban Atlantic, Marie Howland, Professor of Urban Studies at UMD, Scott Nicholson of Monument Bank, and Jeffrey Resetco, VP of Real Estate Development at the Education Realty Trust.
Brent Wensel won first prize for his senior living development plan - The Residences at Crab Creek, based in Annapolis, MD. Kristi Adams won second prize for her waterfront retail development plan - The Shoppes at Easton Point, based in Easton, MD. Mohammad Shiravand won third prize for his residential community plan, Easton Point Village, also based in Easton.

2015 Graduates

The Director poses proudly with her graduating students right before marching in on Friday morning, May 22.

Graduation was another special moment this spring for students and faculty. Not only did Brent Wensel deliver a charming ("I'm still afraid of snakes") student speech, but also won an MRED Award for Academic Excellence, along with Ross Rabinovich and Andrew Newby. Taking top honors for the highest grade point average was Kristi Adams and Sebastian Dern, with Mohammad Shiravand earning the richly deserved MRED Program Director’s Award for notable academic performance and outstanding program promotion and participation.

ICSC Vegas
The Colvin Institute was well represented at the International Council of Shopping Centers, held this year, as always, in Las Vegas in May. ICSC provided a wonderful location in the huge maze of booths for about 20 schools to showcase their real estate programs. Mr. John Lin, CEO of Capstar, and a Council of Advisors member generously coached students in the way business is done at the ICSC, several of them were able to join in on leasing meetings.

On Monday night, the students were hosted by the Colvin Institute at the big Maryland real estate party, where they were able to meet several MRED alums, Eric Walters and Ilya Zusin as well as friends of MRED in the crowded Encore Beach Club setting. We "ran into" Vicki Davis and Scott Nordheimer of Urban Atlantic, as well as Stacy Spann, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Housing Opportunities Commission, who invited the students to send him their resumes and also offered to mentor a group of Fall Capstone students, which will be a special treat, since it has been several years since he last did so from Howard County. Julie Smith, a former instructor, and President of Bozzuto Management, also stopped by to say hello.