ULI Fall Meeting in San Francisco

This year’s ULI Fall Meeting took place in San Francisco from October 5-8. The Colvin Institute supported three students to attend: Travis Wierengo, Laura Burns, and Jingjing Liu, with on the ground support from MRED Assistant Director, Tanya Bansal. Colvin Advisor, Bill Bonstra of Bonstra/Haresign Architects hosted the group for drinks and dinner one evening, and ULI provided many networking opportunities as well as an outstanding series of educational sessions documented by the students. UMD was represented in the main hall by a "huge" banner of the Hines 2015 winning team from UMD. Congrats again to Sebastian Dern and Dan Moreno-Holt, the two MRED and MRED/MARCH members of that team.

The conference kicked off with a day full of tours that brought the students and staff up close and personal with some of the cutting edge projects under way in the San Francisco Bay Area. In between attending informative sessions and even a key note address from former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, the MRED students ran an informational booth for the Colvin Institute. Many of the sessions focused on how tech and innovation from Silicon Valley is, and will be, affecting real estate moving forward. The head of Google real estate discussed the kinds of amenities Google is looking for to support a very large workforce in the Bay area and the need for more affordable housing.

Alumni Highlight: Ben Hobbs

MRED Alum (May ’15) Benjamin H. Hobbs was one of the two first place winners this last Spring where he proposed a grocery store within a food desert in a historic area of Baltimore. Ben was savvy with his incorporation of historic and new market tax credits to create a feasible project. While reflecting on his experiences within the MRED program he gave one piece of advice to students, "You must be OK with someone not liking your idea. There will always be hurdles and a tough skin is necessary. However, a good developer is able to convey their vision effectively, addressing concerns, while promoting an economically feasible and socially beneficial project."

During his second semester of the MRED program Ben started working with the The Dominion Group, a Baltimore-based real estate developer focused in repositioning and refurbishing older homes in viable neighborhoods. The Dominion Group is a member of the Colvin Institute Council of Advisors. Ben is now an Economic Development Officer, at the Baltimore Development Corporation where he is
responsible for working with businesses, real estate developers, and city leaders in the economic development and revitalization of Baltimore City. Tasks include project management, financial analysis, and facilitating public and private partnerships in a wide range of commercial projects.

Fall 2015 New Student Highlight

Catherine Inniss is one of the Fall 2015 incoming students to the MRED program. She received her Bachelors of Science in Sociology from University of Texas in 2001, followed by a M.B.A. in 2013. She has been involved in the real estate industry since 2001, and currently works for Keller Williams Capital Properties where she specializes in residential home sales and first time home buyer educational classes.

She is currently on the board of a Rotary International Club, and a member of HAND. Her future goal is to manage an established woman-owned development company doing great work within the DC/Metro community. She believes affordable housing is key to successful communities. Her long term goal is to work with emancipated youths by training them to live independently and going on to become home owners. She is thrilled to be advancing her goals by pursuing her MRED degree at UMD.

Faculty Profile: Peter Shapiro

Meet Peter Shapiro, returning to campus, as an adjunct faculty member for the Graduate Programs in Real Estate Development. He is teaching the Leadership and Negotiations class. He is an Alumni of the University of Maryland and received his formal education in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences in African American Studies, where he was the recipient of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship.

Currently, Peter is the Executive Director of the Revenue Authority for Prince George's County where he is a part of the county executive economic development team. Peter oversees the economic development finance agency where he deals directly in investment, development, and bonding for PGC communities. He has also been a part of economic development from the public side through the practice of remodeling communities, development, and commitment to creating new jobs.

Peter is a member of the Advisory Board for ULI DC, an ANC Commissioner for DC, and sits on the board for a non-profit organization that recycles building materials called Community Forklift. While serving on the PGC council for six years Peter was directly involved in the process of neighborhood revitalization where he learned by doing the process of real estate development, saw the value in good development, and most importantly saw the need for well planned development for a community.

Most of his professional career he has taught public leadership, but his interest in real estate development stems from wanting to be a part of the personal development of students. His goal is to challenge students to use the skill of self-awareness to look at their own behavior.
in a more complex way by studying group behavior in all of its irrationality, but most importantly being a supportive instructor during the learning process. Peter is excited to be part of a program that emphasizes the equal importance of teaching technical as well as personal skills coupled with giving students real world experiences and connections with professionals in the industry.