

## **University of Iowa University-Community Partnerships**

**Teresa Mangum**

**I**n May 2011, the University of Iowa School of Urban and Regional Planning announced a partnership with the city of Dubuque, Iowa. Between 2011 and 2015, graduate students pursuing a master's degree in the University of Iowa program will assist Dubuque community leaders on a series of year-long projects related to the city's Sustainable Dubuque initiative.

The students' efforts are part of the School of Urban and Regional Planning's community-based engagement program, the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities, which was launched in 2009. In this program, students enrolled in a field problems in planning course to work with a town in Iowa. Over the past 2 years, students in this course have developed sustainability plans for seven Iowa towns.

In fall 2011, the graduate students collaborated with the city of Dubuque. The University of Iowa graduate students were assisted by undergraduate interns from Dubuque's academic institutions: Clarke University, Loras College, the University of Dubuque, and Northeast Iowa Community College. The instructors for the course were Charles Connerly, professor and director of the School of Urban and Regional Planning, and Paul Hanley, University of Iowa associate professor of Urban and Regional Planning.

University of Iowa faculty members met with over 25 Dubuque community leaders to finalize the first five projects. Subsequently, five groups of seven students worked with local partners on indicators and indicator measurements for the city's 11 sustainability principles, renewable energy asset mapping, portrait of poverty in Dubuque, local foods and local institutions, and the design of a Green and Healthy Homes program.

Dubuque, a Mississippi River city of 57,637 residents, takes a holistic approach to making its community sustainable: that is, able to meet the environmental, economic, and social equity needs of today without reducing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The city leaders' plans focus on environmental and ecological integrity, economic prosperity, and social and cultural vibrancy.

The University of Iowa Office of the Provost and Office of the Vice President for Research have committed \$40,690 per year to support the project.

**For more information, contact**

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<http://www.urban.uiowa.edu/iowa-initiative-for-sustainable-communities>

<http://www.urban.uiowa.edu/content/2011-2012-Dubuque-Initiative-Project-Details>