

APA California Central Coast Section

2020 End of Year Report

Rachel Raynor Section Director, AICP

As 2020 closes (thankfully!), and we move forward into 2021, all the while hoping that with the new year comes the change and resume to normal life, we all crave. With the instantaneous shock COVID-19 ignited as well as the State-mandated Shelter in Place order hitting hard in March, the Section's planned activities took a hiatus as we all began to adjust to working, teaching, playing, and doing just about everything from our homes. 2020 was certainly a year none of us anticipated... full of ups and downs. However, as I prefer to see the glass half full, in many ways, switching and adjusting to a virtual platform enabled our three Subsections (which correspond to the three counties in our Section - San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura) to host events which offered Section-wide participation.

From our new Celebrating Cities series (inspired by the Los Angeles Section) kicking off, APA Planner Talks, Service Day with the Nature Conservancy in Ventura County, and Section-wide holiday party, we embraced virtual events and/or social-distant. Now that the kinks from adjusting to virtual events have passed us, the APA Central Coast Executive Board is ready to hit the ground running with events in 2021 and excited to bring events to the membership which provide social and professional development opportunities.

Section Elections

On December 8th, APA's Central Coast Section certified the results of its annual election. With the close of the election, the Executive Board of Directors welcomes new Board members and gives its thanks to a pair of dedicated outgoing Board members. Below are excerpts from the candidate statements submitted by each of the Section's new Board Members.

It is with immense gratitude, that we say farewell to Board Members Kristina Boero and Steve Welton for their years of service. During her years of service as Ventura County's YEP Officer, Kristina worked to develop connections with students and early career planners as well as bring creative networking and professional development events to the Ventura County area. Her interest in helping planners dive into their careers will be missed. Kristina is a Senior Planner for the Ventura County Planning Division, graduate of California Lutheran University's Public Policy & Administration Program, member of Cohort XX of the Ventura County Leadership Academy. During his years of service as the Section's Finance Officer, Steve Welton has been steady in guiding the Section's Board on budget and financial decisions. Additionally, Steve's open mind and considered input will be missed by his fellow Board Members. When not supporting APA Central Coast, Steve is a Principal Planner with Suzanne Elledge Planning & Permitting Services (SEPPS), Inc. and VP of the Board of Trustees for Marymount of Santa Barbara.



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The APA Central Coast Executive Board welcomes Jessica Metzger, AICP to the position of Public Information Officer, Michelle Glueckert D'Anna in the newly formed Programs and Social Officer position, Dillan Murray to the Young and Emerging Planner (YEP) position for the Ventura County Subsection. Selena Evilsizor to the Finance Officer position, and Tanner Shelton, AICP to the Professional Development Officer. The Board welcomes back Hollee King Winegar, AICP to the Awards and Events Officer position.

The Central Coast Section is still actively seeking an APA Member to join the Executive Board of Directors in the role of California Planning Foundation Liaison.

Sponsorships

Collectively, we received \$3,500 in sponsorships in 2020 and we would like to thank Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, Jacobson and Wack and Suzanne Elledge Planning and Permitting Services, Inc. for their continued support, particularly in such a difficult year. It was intended to add sponsors for the CCAPA Subsection Planning Conference and Awards Event. Unfortunately, the event was postponed and then cancelled due to the pandemic.

Annual Awards Program

Our annual Awards Program was scheduled for April 10th, 2020. We were also going to host for the first time an all-day conference on about 3-4 different topics before the awards event. However, we were unable to do both events because of COVID-19 circumstances. We did get a credit for the venue but we don't know if we will be able to use it this year or not (Probably not). However, in light of the setbacks, we did proceed with the review of the projects, a juror meeting on the projects, and Awards of Excellence and Awards of Merit were distributed to the winners. For this year's program (2021), we may do a virtual awards program to highlight the award winners. Nothing has been determined at this time.

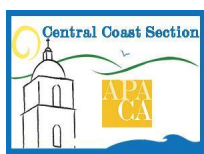
Diversity, Equity, and Membership

The Central Coast Section kicked off the first reading group in October. Participants read *The Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein joined in two hour-long group discussions, with a final discussion scheduled in January 2021.

Professional Development

The Central Coast Section hosted or co-hosted 14 CM eligible events in 2020. Upon the appointment of a new Professional Development Officer (PDO) in Fall 2020, the section took the time to regroup and reevaluate processes and procedures related to Professional Development. This included developing a streamlined CM event application process and working with fellow Section board members to develop standardized procedures for developing CM eligible events.

Additionally, the PDO refocused on working with prospective AICP candidates to prepare for the AICP examination process in Fall 2020. In the final weeks of the year, the PDO made contact



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with prospective candidates for the May 2021 examination cycle. Moving forward into 2021, the PDO will continue to attend calls with the statewide Professional Development Officers and will refocus on focusing on our membership's professional development needs.

Section Website and Membership Communications

2020 was a very eventful year, definitely one to remember. As we all adjusted to the new norm, we also found our dependency for digital connectivity grow. This demand forced our board to adjust how our retreats and meetings are held, but it also highlighted the need for better membership communications through digital methods. Throughout the year, APA kept membership aware of professional development and networking opportunities with a variety of email and social media communications. In 2020, APA Central Coast sent 32 e-blast to our distribution list of 997 individuals. Additionally, the Section shared announcements using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn to reach APA Members and other contacts.

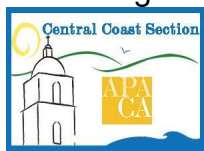
This got us thinking about how our website could be better shaped to serve our membership and be used to help streamline our communications using platforms such as Hootsuite, Buffer, and others. This was highlighted as a goal for 2021. As we continue with the social distancing requirements, we believe the website could be overhauled to allow better back end user control, front end user interface experience, and other structural and organizational changes.

San Luis Obispo Subsection

Due to COVID-19, the San Luis Obispo Subsection altered all planned in-person events and engagement opportunities in 2020. In April 2020, the Subsection facilitated the expansion of APA Central Coast's presence on social media, focusing particularly on Instagram in collaboration with board members. Student representatives and the outgoing Young and Emerging Planners representative developed content ideas, working with the Subsection Director and Social Media Subcommittee to publish on social media platforms.

The Young and Emerging Planners representative changed mid-year from Brian McGinnis to Ethan Stan, both City & Regional Planning (CRP) graduate students at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. APA Central Coast's relationship with Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo continues to be strengthened through this direct connection with one of the top-ranking CRP programs in the country.

Because geographic proximity is less important considering virtual engagement opportunities during COVID-19, the Subsection has teamed with the other two subsections in the APA Central Coast Section to conduct and support virtual events, including the 2020 Holiday Party and the anticipated 2021 Public Participation and Community Engagement Seminar through the Davenport Institute. We look forward to continuing to bring a greater range and diversity of events to the Section in 2021,



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including programmatic workshops, virtual happy hours, digital video screenings, and others.

Santa Barbara Subsection

With COVID-19 hitting by March, our plans established after our January 2020 Board retreat for monthly events to target members and students pivoted as we figured out how to engage our members virtually.

Representing APA, one of our members presented on “Planning for the Future” at UCSB’s Bren School 50th Anniversary in February 2020. Our student reps, in conjunction with Board members worked on organizing a speed networking event at UCSB in April 2020 as well as a Game Night; however, due to the pandemic these events were not pursued. In June 2020, we hosted a Virtual Career Panel for students and members. On November 5, 2020, we hosted a planning and CEQA Trivia night along with our counterparts at AEP, where we utilized breakout rooms and had trivia questions about the Central Coast, planning, CEQA, and current culture. On December 10, 2020, the three Subsection Directors hosted a virtual holiday party in conjunction with AEP, where we played holiday games and enjoyed each other’s company virtually.

As a larger Section during our retreat in summer 2020, we also shared ideas and brainstormed how to encourage backing anti-racism and increasing diversity through events and content.

We are thrilled to be bringing the Public Participation and Community Engagement Seminar to our members (for free!) through the Davenport Institute on January 13 and 20, 2021. We look forward to bringing the Section-wide Planning Academy to our members virtually in February - April 2021.

Ventura Subsection

The Ventura County Subsection adapted to 2020 as best as we could give everything that 2020 delivered. Activities that were produced in and focused on Ventura County communities included in-person, virtual, and recorded events:

- Resume Writing and Professional Headshot Event hosted by APA Central Coast’s Young & Emerging Planners (*January 2020*)
- APA-AEP Joint Mixer and Game Night (*March 2020*)
- APA Planner Talks with Robin Elander about Reopening State in the Face of COVID-19 (*April 2020*)
- Service Day with The Nature Conservancy (*September 2020*)
- APA Planner Talks with Russell Galipeau about Open Space Management (*October 2020*)



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- Vulnerable Communities Speaker co-hosted with California Lutheran University (*November 2020*)
- APA Planner Talks with Gabe Teran about Public Participation and Dialogue (*December 2020*)

Closing Statement

The APA Central Coast Board is looking forward to 2021, a new year and more events and activities planned. We are excited to embrace this virtual/digital age and will be able to engage with other professionals across our Section's geographic boundaries, as well as with other APA sections. Cheers to a new year ahead!

Yours truly,

Rachel Raynor, AICP
APA Central Coast Section Director



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