



CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENTS CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND DESIGN ANNUAL REPORT 2006





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Front Cover: Photos from CYE projects. This report was produced by Debra Flanders Cushing with the assistance of Myriam Escalante



OVERVIEW

OUR MISSION

The Children, Youth and Environments Center for Research and Design works with the design professions and allied disciplines to contribute to the health, safety and welfare of children and youth.

Its interdisciplinary activities in research, teaching and community outreach connect research, policy and practice, while recognizing young people's capacity for meaningful participation in the processes that shape their lives. It focuses in particular on children and youth in environments of disadvantage and those with special needs.

Who we Are

The Children, Youth and Environments Center for Research and Design (CYE) is part of the College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center.

Since its founding in 2004, CYE has moved to the forefront of efforts in the design professions and allied disciplines to promote the health, safety and welfare of children and youth. Working in collaboration with community partners, CYE supports meaningful participation by young people in the creation of thriving communities for all people.

The Center undertakes interdisciplinary activities in research, teaching and community outreach that connect the worlds of research, policy and practice to improve young people's environments. It focuses on children and youth in environments of disadvantage and those with special needs.

The Center also serves as the Secretariat for the CYE Journal, an independent publication that is the premier source for authoritative research articles,

in-depth analyses, cutting-edge field reports, critical book reviews and the latest news on children, youth and their environments. The Journal offers one-stop online access to a growing audience in more than 160 countries. It links research with practice and

supports the free sharing of knowledge across disciplinary and national boundaries.

What we do

CYE works in six focus areas:

Research to evaluate policies and programs and to develop innovative solutions for problems facing children and youth through empirical studies, critical analyses, and participatory action methods.

Dissemination of research findings to share expertise, support the exchange of experience across communities and draw lessons to guide future work through professional and general media.

Application of research findings to improve young people's quality of life through collaborative, community-based outreach and intervention.

Knowledge and skill development of students and practitioners through teaching, service learning, internships, practical training, professional development, and other educational activities.

Capacity building through the formation of strategic partnerships and synergistic networks of researchers, practitioners and community stakeholders, including young people, as well as actors in the public and private sectors.

Advocacy and awareness raising on behalf of policies, programs and actions that benefit children and youth through white papers, recommendations to decision makers, expert witness testimony, and other forms of advice and influence.

OUR VISION

CYE envisions a world in which children enjoy good health and grow up in safe environments that support their development into young adults in sustainable and inclusive communities.



Organizational Structure

The Center is governed by an Executive Committee, chaired by a director. The Board of Directors helps connect the Center to key stakeholders and assists with fundraising. The Advisory Council provides guidance for strategic directions of development and offers feedback on Center activities. Several of its members also participate in project activities. Projects also involve affiliate faculty, research affiliates, research associates, PhD students, and interns.

Publications

The Center hosts the CYE Journal, an independent peer-reviewed publication with a multidisciplinary audience of researchers and practitioners. The Center also publishes fact sheets, a newsletter, and an annual report.

Information Resources

The Center maintains several interactive and searchable databases, including a News Archive, a Directory of Organizations, a Directory of Experts, a Calendar of Events and a Bibliographic Database. It also manages an online forum. All of these resources are freely accessible.

Courses

Center staff are involved in the delivery of undergraduate and graduate level for-credit courses at the University of Colorado, related to young people and their environments. In addition, the Center is able to offer workshops and professional development courses.

Financial Support

The College of Architecture and Planning funds the Center's core operations. Support in future years is guaranteed by an endowment of \$2.5 million, established by an anonymous donor. Grants and donations from various sources support specific Center projects. The CYE Center is not a grant-awarding organization.

OUR COMMITMENT

CYE is committed to the creation of partnerships that connect the resources of the University of Colorado with the needs of children and youth in the communities it serves, locally and elsewhere. Through its work, CYE develops and shares experience- and research-based knowledge to guide actions that improve young people's environments.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In the Center's first annual report, we could look back on a very successful launch year. We had prepared the groundwork for further development and had reason to expect an exciting future for CYE. I am pleased to note that the results of our work have far exceeded our expectations for where we would be at this time.

In this second annual report, I highlight some of our recent accomplishments and share news about ongoing developments and new initiatives.

Most dramatic and significant was, no doubt, the pledge made by an anonymous donor to endow the Center with a donation of \$2.5 million. This transformational gift represents the largest donation ever in the history of the downtown CU-Denver campus. It will guarantee an ongoing source of support for the Center's operations and give us more flexibility to identify and develop emerging opportunities. I am also grateful to Lynda Simmons, member of the Board of Directors, who made a generous donation of \$10,000, doubling her gift of last year. These gifts are a validation of the Center's work and a vote of confidence in its capacity to play an important role in the creation of healthy environments where children and youth can thrive. More than that, they represent a serious commitment to the well-being of young people and an investment in their future.

It is thanks to private donations such as these that the Center can leverage additional funding, do limited bridge-gap financing, carry out pilot work for grant applications, incentivize specific activities, and recognize deserving accomplishments. As the Center establishes a track record through the completion of projects and responsible management of its budget, private gifts will also help provide critical operational support. Our goal is to grow the endowment to a level where the Center will be less dependent on outside sources for carrying out its work.

Since the first annual report, the Center was successful in 10 grant applications for a total of \$230,000. At the end of 2006, ongoing projects, ranged from the redevelopment of school grounds to the documentation of children's lives in environments of poverty in cities around the world.

A notable positive development was the arrival of

Professor Louise Chawla, past International Coordinator of the UNESCO-supported Growing Up in Cities Programme and an international authority on place-based environmental education and participatory approaches to urban planning and community development involving children and youth. The Center is very fortunate to have attracted Dr. Chawla, a leader of worldwide renown. Her presence boosts the Center's capacity in many ways, including its ability to support the work of PhD students. I also welcome Rachel Cleaves who is joining the Center as full-time Community Outreach Coordinator for the Learning Landscape Initiative. She brings experience in community organizing as former director for an international development program based in coastal Belize. She has also coordinated volunteer projects in Mexico, Paraguay, and Ecuador.

A physical home for the Center is essential to its ability to operate. I am very glad that this home is now being created in the Environmental Design Building on the Boulder campus. The space comprises 1,300 square feet. Upon completion of remodeling in the summer of 2007, it will have 12 work spaces with computers, printer, scanner, project work space, a lunch room, and a library room. It will also include a conference room, designed by Bradley Smith, an environmental design graduate, and constructed under the supervision of Julee Herdt, an award-winning architect and new CYE Faculty Affiliate. CYE is partnering with the Society for Creative Aging and Horizons Alternative K-8 School in Boulder in the intergenerational production of a mural for the entrance to the Center. Creation of the CYE Center space is made possible thanks to the generous support of Bob Surles and Chris Jacobs.

The Learning Landscape Initiative, directed by Professor Lois Brink, is a continuing success story. In addition to 13 new dedications, work is now extending to New Orleans, LA. We also carried out several other school-ground focused projects in Boulder and Lafayette. Later sections of this report describe these and other Center activities in more detail.

The CYE Journal now has readers in more than 160 countries. The number of independent accesses has steadily grown to more than 20,000 per month



and continues to increase. More than 60 first-time donors made small contributions to help fund publication of the Journal. However, it remains a challenge to publish high-quality papers without dedicated funding for copy editing. Obtaining sponsorship for the Journal will, therefore, be a priority.

CYE had a very visible presence at several national and international events. Faculty, research associates and PhD students all actively participated in professional meetings by organizing and moderating sessions and presenting papers. It is a sign of growing recognition of the Center that it is now receiving invitations from researchers, practitioners and the media to share information about its just completed and ongoing projects.

An engaging guest-speaker series is a further sign of vibrancy. Recent Center guests of note were Greg Duncan of Northwestern University, a national authority on children and neighborhood poverty; David Driskell from Cornell University, UNESCO Chair for Growing Up in Cities; and Richard Louv, champion of the "No Child Left Inside" campaign. The Center will organize additional high-caliber presentations in the year ahead as a way to inform audiences from across the University and the community about leading-edge work in the field.

The Center seeks to undertake work that matters and makes a difference for the better. To maximize the impact of its activities, it is committed to using interdisciplinary approaches and forming strategic partnerships. In its efforts, it charts a bold course that brings together researchers and practitioners from diverse backgrounds and settings, working synergistically to marshal complementary contributions needed to help create child- and youth-friendly environments. An excellent example of this approach is Denver's Child- and Youth-Friendly City Initiative, which was officially launched on June 13, 2006, with a presentation by Mayor John Hickenlooper. The Initiative gained momentum throughout the year, culminating in December's well-attended You(th) Speak event and laying the foundation for a multi-year planning process to make Denver the #1 Child- and Youth-Friendly City in the U.S.

By all accounts, in a very short time and with limited resources, the Center has established an

astounding record. It has developed a promising research agenda, obtained long-term financial stability, forged productive partnerships with community organizations and local government, and supported the implementation of curricular content aligned with its research and community outreach goals.

While we celebrate these early accomplishments, we must also reflect on the lessons learned during the first three years of the Center's existence. An initial step towards this end was a retreat, held on September 22-23, 2006, at the Mountain Research Station north of Nederland, CO, where faculty members, research associates, and PhD students gathered to discuss opportunities and challenges for future development. A full-scale evaluation of the Center's first three years is planned for summer 2007.

Going forward, we are looking to strengthen the many ways in which CYE is already working to improve young people's lives. To realize our goals, much remains to be done. It is a pleasure and a privilege to engage the work ahead with colleagues and friends who share unrivaled expertise and bring exceptional dedication to the tasks at hand.

Willem van Vliet—
Director



PEOPLE

First and foremost, the work in the CYE Center is the product of the people associated with it. Where three years ago, there were a few scattered faculty, working on topics of shared interest largely in isolation on three different campuses, today the Center provides a much needed forum for discussion and collaboration. There is an organizational structure in place whose functionality has begun to emerge, bringing together faculty from around the University of Colorado, research affiliates from other institutions and the community, research associates, a dozen PhD students, and a growing number of interns. Under the visionary leadership of Bob Surles, the Board of Directors is taking form with new members committing their support.

The Center received a major boost when Louise Chawla accepted an appointment in the College of Architecture and Planning, enabling her to help set direction for the Center's development. An international authority on place-based environmental education and participatory approaches to urban planning and community development involving children and youth, Professor Chawla also serves as co-editor of the CYE Journal. In addition, she joined the Center's Executive Committee, along with Elizabeth Kozleski, UNESCO Chair for Inclusive Education and Director of the National Institute for Urban School Improvement. Although Professor Kozleski just assumed a new position at Arizona State University, she will remain involved in the Center's activities.



Louise Chawla

With the expansion of Center activities, administrative support is becoming increasingly important. A welcome addition in this regard is the full-time Community Outreach Coordinator for the Learning Landscape Initiative, funded by a Community Development Block Grant. Rachel Cleaves, who will assume this position early in 2007, will contribute valuable community-organizing experience and bilingual communication skills.

GRANTS AND FUNDRAISING

Last year, the CYE Center became the beneficiary of the largest donation ever in the history of the CU-Denver downtown campus, when an anonymous donor pledged an endowment of \$2.5 million to support its future operations. This unprecedented gift was announced on June 13 by Chancellor Gregory Stiegmann at the kick off of Denver's Child- and Youth-Friendly City Initiative attended by Mayor John Hickenlooper, Denver Public Schools Superintendent Michael Bennet and representatives of nearly 100 organizations from across the city. The donor intends for "this gift to leverage additional resources so CYE can attract excellent researchers and students and establish the university as a place of national and international prominence for work focused on the relationships among children, youth and their environments."

Another significant gift came from Lynda Simmons, member of the CYE Board of Directors, who donated \$5,000 in 2005 and then generously doubled that amount for a \$10,000 gift in 2006. Her sponsorship made possible the Lynda Simmons Award for Excellence in Youth and Community Development received last year by Illène Pevec, a PhD student in the College of Architecture and Planning, and helped support the New York City case study for the Place of Children project (see Projects). It also provides funding for the intergenerational mural that will grace the CYE Center entrance, a collaborative project with the Society for Creative Aging and Horizons Alternative School.

In December 2005, working with the CU Foundation, we established online giving capability for the journal, which resulted in more than 60 voluntary contributions from first-time donors. Although the online gifts are still modest, they represent a start of what we intend to become a more significant source of cost recovery for the journal.

The Center continued its record of successful grant applications (see Appendix C for a list). Overall, we submitted 14 applications. Of these, two are pending and 10 were awarded for a total of about \$230,000 in new funding. About one-third of this amount, (\$92,000) helped support the Child- and Youth-Friendly City Initiative and the Learning Landscape Initiative.



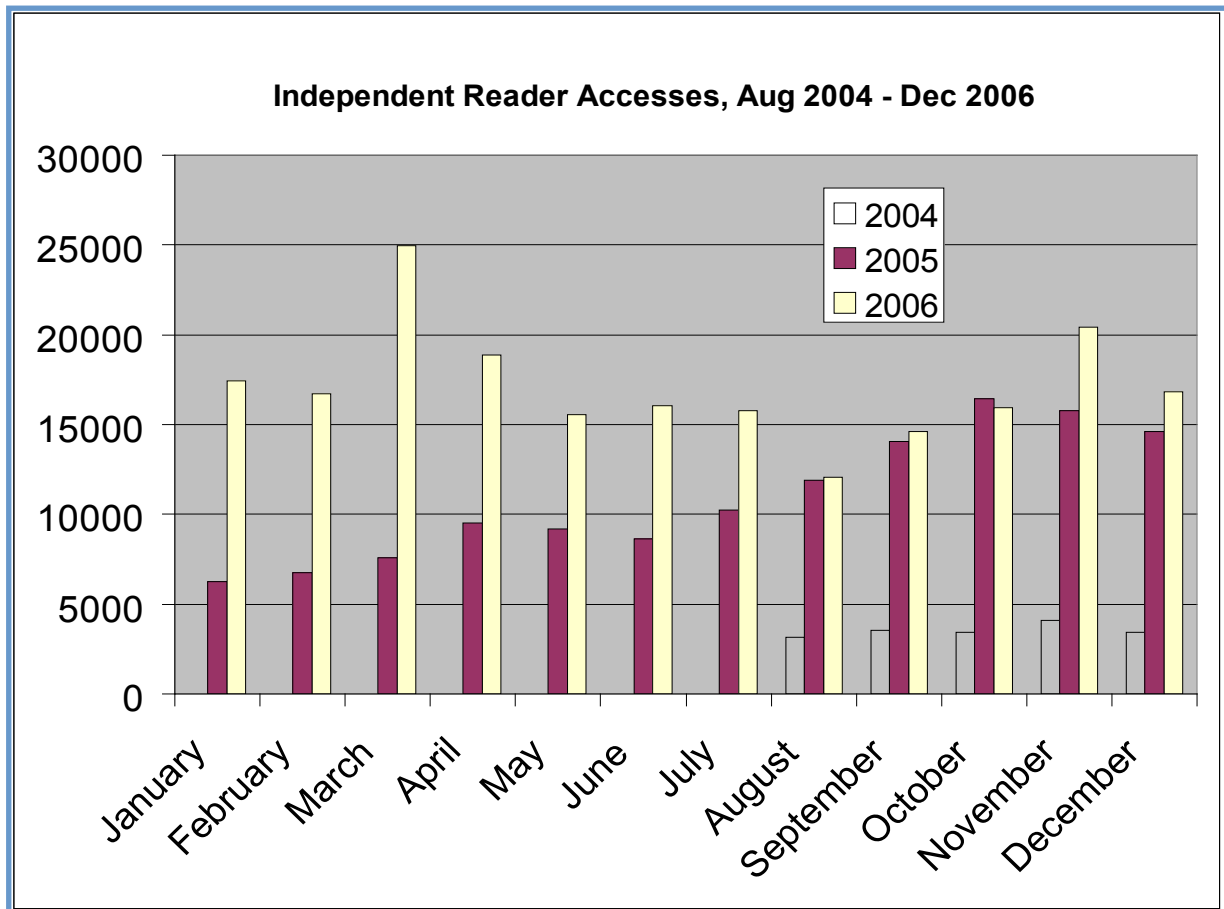
JOURNAL

The Center serves as the secretariat for the CYE Journal, which published 46 papers and 21 book reviews from fall 2005 through winter 2006. The three issues that appeared during this period, focused on specific themes: children and local governance (volume 15, no. 2), independent mobility (volume 16, no. 1), and critical reflections on participatory practices (volume 16, no. 2). This last issue was the first of a four-part sequence, each covering a different world region. While many papers were broadly international, others addressed situations in 17 specific countries.

The global reach of the Journal is also evident from its readership, now found in more than 160 countries. Independent reader accesses have nearly doubled, from 10,000 to more than 20,000 per

month. On an average day, readers download more than 400 papers. A further sign of growing demand for the journal is the increasing number of requests for re-publication of papers it has published.

The Journal is now indexed in more archival sources, including SocIndex, Sociological Abstracts, Community Services Abstracts, Sage Urban Studies Abstracts, Sage Family Studies Abstracts, Journal of Planning Literature, the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, and the Directory of Open Access Journals. We also entered into a licensing agreement with EBSCO Information Services, a leading subscription agent and database provider servicing public libraries in 30 states and every academic library in more than 50 countries.



PROJECTS

Building and Sustaining Schools and Community Through Play

is the motto of the Learning Landscape Initiative, directed by Lois Brink, in which CU students and faculty work in partnership with Denver Public Schools, neighborhood associations, community members and non-profit organizations to provide technical assistance in the planning, design, implementation and maintenance of renovated school grounds through a participatory process. In 2005, there were 13 dedications of new Learning Landscapes. To date, 56 Learning Landscapes have been built for an investment of more than \$25 million. They serve more than 18,000 students and 250,000 city residents,



Students help maintain the native landscaping around their school.

mostly in neighborhoods of disadvantage. The Initiative is currently evaluating impacts on children and other community members and has drawn attention from the City of New Orleans, which is interested in exploring how Learning Landscapes can be incorporated in its redevelopment plans.

How Can They Look so Happy?

Was a project by Jennifer Kirschke, a professional photographer in the College's Visual Resource Center, who photographed and interviewed children displaced by Hurricane Katrina soon after the disaster. With a Quick Response Grant from UCB's Natural Hazards Center she traveled to Bayou La Batre, AL, Biloxi and Gulfport, MS, Baton Rouge and Lafayette, LA



Glen who rescued his family, with brother

and Colorado Springs, CO. Her work challenged the stereotypical image, created by the popular media, portraying children as vulnerable, rather than resilient. The interviews by Jennifer produced stories of remarkable resourcefulness and courage by children. Twelve-year-old Glen's rescue of his grandmother, little brother and quadriplegic uncle by floating them on a mattress out a second-story window to a nearby, higher house, is just one such story. Further, most children did manage to get away, and most of them had access to resources. Most were also surrounded by loving families. A conclusion of the project is that efforts to rebuild the Gulf Coast communities should include opportunities for children and youth themselves to become actively involved in the redevelopment.

Building and Growing on Common Ground.

In this collaborative project, undergraduate and graduate students from CU work with students at the K-12 Flatiron Academy for spe-





Students at Flatiron Academy build raised garden beds.

cial-needs and at-risk youth in Lafayette, Colorado, to create and maintain a vegetable garden and a straw-bale greenhouse. The goal is to create common ground, literally and figuratively, for the university students and these youth, while including also residents from the surrounding neighborhood, which houses a low-income, minority population, with little public space and few opportunities for growing flowers or vegetables. While the CU students develop a better understanding of the difficult challenges facing others who are less privileged, the garden also offers an opportunity for cross-cultural sharing of practices and traditions in agriculture and food preparation. In addition, it will provide a space for community and school social events, gatherings and celebrations.

The project prepares design students for professional practice that engages with the needs of non-traditional clientele. It implements the University of Colorado's Vision 2010, which calls for innovative initiatives that bridge disciplines and connect the campus with the community. Funding for this project was provided by the CU Boulder Outreach Committee; the CU President's Office for Diversity and Excellence; the Service-Learning Program; and Flatiron Academy. The National Wildlife Federation offered a workshop for participating students and teachers.

Building Civic Engagement by Building Affordable Housing. During five consecutive semesters, starting in the sum-

mer of 2005, senior environmental design students have worked under the direction of faculty members Michael Hughes and Bruce Wrightsman with Thistle Community Housing and the Mapleton Mobile Homeowners Association in Boulder to design and build a comfortable, attractive, structurally sound and energy-efficient dwelling using the chassis of an abandoned trailer home. The unit will meet local codes and standards. Expected to be completed in August, 2007, it will be occupied by a qualifying local household. This "TrailerWrap" project creates a demonstration model for building low-cost housing with simple technologies. It also teaches a new generation of young design professionals about the housing challenges facing low-income households and the possibilities of adaptive reuse. Finally, the project shows the potential of developing a curriculum that provides experiential, hands-on learning in service of community needs. Funding for this project came from the CU Boulder Outreach Committee; the Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement; the Service-Learning Program at UCB; and the CU President's Office for Diversity and Excellence.

Intergenerational Mural. The CYE Center is partnering with the Society for Creative Aging and Horizons K-8 Alternative School in the creation of a mural for the entrance of the CYE Center. Elder artists are working with students to create a multi-dimensional representation of a child-friendly community. University of Colorado students are also participating. Concept mapping will take place dur-



Judy Epstein works with Jeremy Leiber on the intergenerational mural project for the CYE center.



ing the spring of 2007, to be followed by the creation of leaves for the Tree of Life, paintings and sneaker art. The project will be installed in stages and is projected for completion in June, 2008. Funding is provided by the CU Outreach Committee and Lynda Simmons.

The Place of Children. To mobilize efforts on behalf of children living in poverty in cities around the world, the CYE Center is preparing a book that will educate the public about the capacities of the urban poor by illustrating the active roles of children in improving their living conditions. The book, coordinated by Willem van Vliet--, will also describe policies and programs that support children's efforts. Its provisional title, *The Place of Children*, has a double meaning: it refers to children's actual living environments as well as to their role in community development.

The book aims to focus attention on the challenges remaining after the First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) and strives to make a contribution to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

Featuring first-rate photography, profiles of children and documentary text based on archival records and field interviews, the book may also lead to several collateral outcomes, including CD-ROMs, exhibits,

calendars and greeting cards. Children selected for inclusion in the project will be actively involved in community improvement activities.

UN-Habitat has awarded \$15,000 to CYE to support the first phase of this project, which has been endorsed by Childwatch International and Save the Children Sweden.

Participatory Photography: Children's Voices in Municipal Planning. This project used "participatory photography," a study abroad studio of environmental design students aimed at involving children in the master planning of Yali, a new municipality in a fast-growing tourism region of southwestern Turkey.

As a basis for making plans, we asked 24 children from elementary and middle schools to use photography to help identify those attributes that make a place special, and thus loved and cared for. In two workshops, we displayed their photographs and stories, as well as our own analyses. With an audience of local residents, professionals and city officials, we used their photographs to illustrate our recommendations for regional and local land use, as well as economic development policies.

The children said that they liked new parks, ballfields and Internet cafes, but nothing gave them as much joy and satisfaction as wild places and the chance to cultivate the earth, play under great trees and mess with junk. We linked our policy, planning and regulatory proposals to sustainability principles and the places and characteristics that children showed in their photos.

Child- and Youth- Friendly Cities Initiative. In June 2006, an Executive Committee comprised of representatives from CYE, the Denver Mayor's Office for Children and Education, and Assets for Colorado Youth launched the Child- and Youth-Friendly Cities Initiative (CYFC) for the City of Denver. The concept of "child-friendly cities" has been developed by planners, researchers, and policy makers interested in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This convention is the first legally binding international instrument to spell out the basic human rights of all children. Child-friendly cities have environments



Judy, 13, from the Mukuru slum in Nairobi, participates in *The Place of Children*



that meet the needs of children and youth and processes through which young people can make their voices heard on matters that affect them.

A Steering Committee is working with more than 100 stakeholders from across Denver to develop a strategic plan of action to make Denver the #1 child- and youth-friendly city in the United States. Stakeholders include the Honorable Mayor John Hickenlooper, the Superintendent of Denver Public Schools, Denver's City Planning Department, the Downtown Denver Area Partnership, the Mayor's Youth Commission, the Piton Foundation, and numerous public officials, business owners, and concerned citizens. Denver is the first city in the United States seeking to implement this treaty, making it a leader in the nation and a model for creating livable communities for people of all ages.



Moustaffa presents a Neighborhood Guidebook to Mayor Hickenlooper during the CYFC Launch.

If They Build It, Will They Come?

funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Active Living Program, examines how the redevelopment of inner-city school playgrounds into Learning Landscapes influences children's physical activity. Three newly renovated playgrounds and three playgrounds that were renovated over four years ago were compared to three playgrounds that have not been renovated. Results show significantly higher levels of physical activity at the six renovated playgrounds. These effects vary by gender. Boys are significantly more



A community work day at a learning landscape playground

likely than girls to be very active at the Learning Landscape playgrounds. The impact of playground design on physical activity also varies by gender. Boys were most active in the basketball areas, while girls were most active in the swing areas. During the upcoming year, CU Education Distinguished Professor Margaret Eisenhart's qualitative research methods doctoral courses will further examine these gender differences.

A City-Wide Safe Routes to School Model

This project, funded by the Colorado Department of Transportation, aims to: (1) provide children, parents, and other community stakeholders with a method for communicating their concerns about the safety of the Westwood neighborhood located in Southwest Denver; and (2) address these concerns through a comprehensive approach tailored to the needs of their neighborhood, based on the "4 E's": Education, Engineering, Enforcement, and Encouragement. Using a web- and interview-based audit method, we are conducting a comprehensive safe routes assessment with elementary school children and community stakeholders. A Safe Routes to School Planning Team will include parents, teachers, school administrators, government officials, business leaders, law enforcement officials, health advocates, and professionals in transportation, urban planning, engineering, and health. It will evalu-



ate route safety and develop strategies for neighborhood-wide interventions to improve route safety. Community members will receive a report in English and Spanish in September 2007.

Designing an Environmental Courtyard at Creekside Elementary.

Last Fall, PhD students Ian Bates, Debra Flanders Cushing and Illène Pevec taught an undergraduate service-learning course in environmental design in which university students worked with more than 300 K-5 students at Creekside Elementary School in Boulder to design an environmental courtyard. Children expressed their preferences in weekly hands-on design exercises, using leaves, shells, and pinecones for “natural” designs. They also drew, read nature stories, and walked in small groups around the school. Parents and teachers also indicated their desires in questionnaires on favorite design elements.

The project found several differences between children and teachers. Children wanted creative, outdoor play, whereas teachers wanted more quiet, directed learning. Children wanted to be able to climb up high, particularly into trees, whereas adults preferred that they do not. The children wanted animals, like chickens that could provide eggs, while teachers wondered who would care for them. But everyone wanted water, and plants to attract wildlife and provide healthy food. And everyone agreed on



CU students reading nature-inspired stories to two girls at Creekside.

an apple tree and strawberries. The undergraduates tried to reconcile the differences through zones for different uses. An organic farmer and a landscape architect provided assistance, as did Bryce Brown, director of the Our Love of Children Foundation.

The Big Green Rabbit™ is a new initiative in children’s media for which the CYE Center serves as the Educational Advisory Board. Conceived by Shane DeRolf, a Boulder-based leader in children’s



Audition for the Big Green Rabbit™

entertainment, the purpose of the initiative is to use television, books, music CDs, videos/DVDs, e-magazines, the Internet and live events to promote healthy eating habits and exercise in engaging ways, while seeking to inspire children’s connections to nature.

The CYE Center advises the initiative on the research on childhood obesity, children’s relationships with nature, and design for active outdoor play. A proposed TV series, to be broadcast by PBS, will feature the Big Green Rabbit™ and preschool friends, with as one of its aims to show homes, neighborhoods and communities that make nature play and exploration as accessible as possible for children. This makes the Center’s location in CU’s College of Architecture and Planning a good match with the initiative’s goals. (For more information, visit www.BigGreenRabbit.com).

TEACHING AND EDUCATION

The Center strives to incorporate issues related to children, youth and environments at all levels of the curriculum in the College of Architecture and Planning. These courses are a direct implementation of principles of integrative design that are central to the College's mission. Thus, they are interdisciplinary in their approach and connect education with community outreach and research applied to real world issues. Students have valuable practical learning experiences not available through regular classroom and studio instruction. A good example at the undergraduate level was a course in which PhD students guided environmental design students in working with students at all grade levels at Creekside Elementary School, Boulder, on the collaborative design of the school's



CU students presenting their courtyard design to Creekside elementary school students.

courtyard. Likewise, the TrailerWrap project has so far involved more than 50 environmental design students in the design and actual construction of an affordable housing unit. At the master's level, the Learning Landscape Initiative continues to provide an excellent context for community-based design-build studios, enrolling 25 students and producing design documents for five Denver elementary schools in the past year. In addition, a research-focused doctoral seminar gave PhD students an opportunity to study issues related to their dissertation work.

CYE also partnered with the Gold Crown Foundation in Lakewood, CO, to offer two one-week



Planning camp attendees presenting their final project.

design and planning camps. The goal for the youth taking part was to use a variety of communication tools and ultimately take interest in a design or planning career. Each day focused on a new topic and built on the previous day's lessons and activities towards a final project through a variety of hands-on activities with tangible products. Visiting professionals from the community also contributed their expertise. The participants produced impressive graphics and community models.

RECOGNITION

The Learning Landscape Initiative garnered another accolade for its role in the transformation of rundown elementary school grounds. Last year, it was a co-recipient of a Merit Award from the Colorado Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture (CCASLA). The Trailer Wrap project, slated for completion summer 2007, also won praise as it received the Martin Luther King Jr. Award, given through the College of Architecture and Planning for contributions to the development of affordable housing.

In addition, several people were recognized for their individual accomplishments. Michael Hughes was nominated for a CU Boulder Environmental Awards and received Honorable Mention for his work as Trailer Wrap project leader. Alejandra

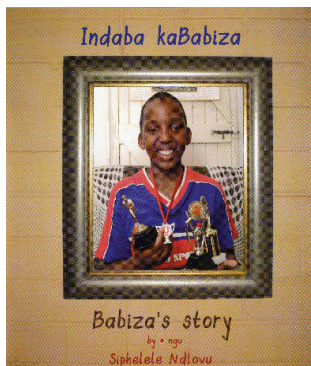




Uddhab Bhandary and Illène Pevec accepting their award.

Palacios, a CYE intern, completed the Presidents Leadership Class and received a CU-Boulder Service Learning Award. Debbie Flanders Cushing, Illène Pevec and Uddhab Bhandary took first place in the campus-wide graduate student competition for the "Outstanding Research and Creative Activities Award" at CU-Denver for their work on "A Children's Guide to Active Living: Participatory Action Research" with Pamela Wridt. Illène Pevec also received the 2006 Lynda Simmons Award for Excellence in Youth and Community Development and was recognized by the Agent of Change Award, while Ian Bates was the recipient of the Children, Youth and Environments Award for Outstanding Support in Service-Learning.

Through Jill Kruger in South Africa, on the evening of November 30, World AIDS Day, the CYE Center was able to honor 10-year old Siphellele Ndlovu for sharing his experience as a child of an HIV-positive mother in *Indaba Kababiza*, a story which shows great inner strength and which serves as an inspiration to children around the world. *Indaba Kababiza* is a remarkable and important contribution to implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It sets a shining example for child-to-child communication on issues important to their everyday lives. Such communication is a foundation for healthy communi-



ties. The courage of Siphellele Ndlovu is a model for responsible citizenship. In acknowledgement and in grateful appreciation of his contribution towards the well-being of children around the world, the CYE editors unanimously decided to present him with a Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Citizenship and a \$300 cash award.

Various CYE projects received media attention (Appendix E). The Trailer Wrap project was written up in four places. KSVY 91.3 also interviewed Michael Hughes about it. During the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation aired a television interview with Darcy Varney on child-friendly cities. Learning Landscapes got coverage in Canada as well through an article in the Toronto Star. The Colorado Daily featured "Grounding Environmental Design" on the front page of its Welcome Back edition, after which the Center received several requests for assistance with creating community gardens focused on children and youth. Jennifer Kirschke's photographs of children in the Gulf Coast in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina were exhibited in Norlin Library and the College of Architecture and Planning galleries in Denver and Boulder. The McWane Science Center requested to host the exhibit, which will also go on display at the Dairy Center for the Arts in Boulder. The project prompted television interviews on CBS and Fox television and led to an article published in the CYE Journal.

CONFERENCES AND PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

CYE work gained greater visibility not only through media coverage but also through conferences and professional meetings. Thirteen CYE faculty, research associates and PhD students actively participated in a total of 7 local-regional events, 14 national events, and 8 international events, organizing and moderating sessions and presenting papers. The Center was especially well represented at the World Urban Forum (III) in Vancouver where Darcy Varney presented information about children from the Mathare slum in Nairobi and helped coordinate the networking event, "Discovering the Place of Chil-



dren in Cities and Slums Around the World." She also served as an advisor to the World Youth Forum and co-authored the UN-HABITAT issue paper, "Youth in Urban Development: Bringing Ideas into Action." At the same event, Fahriye Sancar presented research from Turkey, while Willem van Vliet-- attended the Advisory Board meeting of the Human Settlements Network of UN-Habitat. In advance of the Forum, several CYE-affiliated faculty and students participated in a UNESCO workshop on "Growing Up in Cities." Louise Chawla gave a keynote address at the annual meeting of the North American Montessori Teachers Association and was an invited participant at the National Dialogue on Children and Nature. Lois Brink and Beverly Kingston presented findings of their Learning Landscapes research at the World Planners Congress in Vancouver and the Active Living Research Annual Conference in San Diego. It is a sign of growing recognition of the Center that it is now receiving invitations from researchers, practitioners and the media to share information about its just completed and ongoing projects. (See Appendix D for a full list of events with CYE participation).

VISITORS AND SPEAKERS

An engaging guest-speaker series is a sign of vibrancy of the Center. Recent guests of note were Greg Duncan of Northwestern University, a national authority on children and neighborhood poverty whose visit was co-sponsored by the Institute of Behavioral Science; David Driskell from Cornell University, UNESCO Chair for Growing Up in Cities; and Richard Louv, champion of the "No Child Left Inside" campaign whose visit was co-sponsored by the CU Environmental Center. Other guests included Selim Iltus (City University of New York) who gave a talk on youth participation in design and planning during disaster recovery and Tom Miller (National Research Center) who spoke about the use of surveys in the evaluation of child- and youth-oriented programs. The Center will organize additional high-caliber presentations in the year ahead as a way to inform audiences from across the University and the community about leading-edge work in the field. In addition to talks by visitors, the CYE speaker series included presentations on research at the University of Colorado by Lois Brink and Beverly Kingston,

Louise Chawla, Margaret Eisenhart, Ben Kirshner, Kathleen Man, Michael McDevitt, Deborah Thomas and Darcy Varney, and Pamela Wridt, on topics ranging from neighborhood safety in Denver to environmental activism in California to child-trafficking in Nepal.

LOOKING AHEAD

The coming year holds great promise as we move forward to complete several projects, deepen our commitment to current initiatives and prepare to take on several new projects, while concentrating our efforts in more select areas of involvement.

Two projects concerned with, respectively, the effects of Learning Landscapes on children's physical activity and children's use of their neighborhood, will come to an end. The Safe Routes to School project will also reach its conclusion, and the Trailer Wrap will be finished as a self-sufficient housing unit.

At the same time, several ongoing initiatives will grow in significance. The Learning Landscape Initiative will benefit from the hire of a full-time Community Outreach Coordinator and will receive \$100,000 in additional support from the Temple Buehl Foundation. It also expects to expand operations to New Orleans, LA, as part of ongoing redevelopment efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The Child- and Youth-Friendly City Initiative will gain momentum as it enters the visioning stage of a participatory action process that will involve thousands of Denver residents and lay the foundation for development of a community-based master plan to increase the city's livability for people of all ages.

We will begin preparations for the organization of a national symposium on nature exploration and active play that will bring together developers, builders, local government officials, design and planning professionals, and researchers from around the country. This event will also result in the establishment of a web-based good practices database in collaboration with the Natural Learning Initiative at North Carolina State University.



The CYE alliance with Big Green Rabbit™ will develop more fully as production of television episodes and associated events and products will get underway. Rocky Mountain PBS has agreed to broadcast the BGR programs, starting in the Fall of 2007, and to seek access to a national audience.

Other new projects will get underway as well. Among them, PLACES (Planning, Local Action, Community Engagement, and Skillbuilding) will introduce urban planning into several Denver high-schools. We are also in discussion with Casey Middle School in Boulder, which will be re-built after voters approved \$31 million through a bond issue. Casey aims to become a national model for a community school in a “green” building and has expressed interest in having CYE guide a participatory design process with the school’s students. The same bond issue will also fund re-development at Horizons K-8 Alternative School in Boulder, where CYE will involve CU environmental design students with children at all grade levels in participatory design of the school grounds, to be followed by a summer design camp.

In addition, the coming year will see the completion of the CYE Center space on the Boulder campus and the start of an intergenerational multimedia mural to mark the Center’s entrance in a collaboration between the Society for Creative Aging and the Horizons school. We will also begin an internship program to engage more youth in the Center’s activities.

Finally, working with the Board of Directors, the CU Foundation, and the Dean, the Center will intensify its fundraising activities to grow the endowment and generate funding for specific projects and activities.

Emerging approaches in the Center’s activities emphasize participatory action and evaluation, and focus on projects related to schools, local communities and access to nature. A retreat planned for the summer will provide an opportunity to take stock of the Center’s first three years and determine how it can contribute most effectively to the improvement of environments for children and youth in the years ahead.



The new lounge space in the CYE Center, room 234 of the ENVD Building.



APPENDIX A - PEOPLE AT THE CENTER

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Barbara Stuart
Robert Surles
Darcy Varney
Bambi Yost

APPENDIX B - SUPPORT FOR THE CENTER

The Center is affiliated with and receives support from the College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Colorado at Denver and the Health Sciences Center. CYE has received additional support from:

- AIA Plastics, Inc., Denver
- Annie Casey Foundation
- Buell Foundation
- Caring for Colorado Foundation
- Center for Humanities and the Arts, University of Colorado, Boulder
- City of Denver, Housing and Community Services
- City of Denver, Mayor's Office for Education and Children
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Colorado Physical Activity and Nutrition Program
- Colorado Rockies
- Daniels Fund
- Denver Broncos
- Denver Foundation
- Denver Public Schools
- Engbar Pipe&Steel Co.
- Environmental Center, University of Colorado at Boulder
- El Pomar Foundation
- First Western Union
- Gates Family Foundation
- Greater Outdoors Colorado
- Home Depot, Boulder
- Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement, University of Colorado
- JVA, Inc.
- McCormick Foundation
- McGuckins Hardware
- National Science Foundation
- Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado
- Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, University of Colorado
- Open Society Institute/Soros Foundation
- Outreach Committee, University of Colorado at Boulder
- Piton Foundation
- Precision Roofing and Design, Longmont
- Preservation Technology, LLC
- RSC Equipment Rental
- Salazar Foundation
- Save the Children, Sweden
- Service-Learning Program, University of Colorado at Boulder
- Lynda Simmons
- Robert Surles
- U.N. Habitat
- University of Colorado at Denver, Chancellor's Office
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

APPENDIX C – GRANTS

New

"The Place of Children." Award amount, \$15,000, from UN-HABITAT, Partners and Youth Section. Willem van Vliet- (coordinator).

"Children's guide to active living: An analysis of children's use, negotiation and perceptions of their local environment for physical activity." Award amount: \$70,327, from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Active Living Research Program. Pamela Wridt (PI).

"Documenting Hurricane Katrina's Aftermath: Photos and Interviews with Children." Award amount: \$3,000, from the Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center at CU-Boulder. Jennifer Kirschke.

"Partners for Integrated Health Denver." Award amount: \$12,900, from COPAN. Learning Landscape Initiative

"Master inventory of playgrounds in Denver". Award amount: \$5,000 (of \$90,000 total to City of Denver Parks & Recreation), from Greater Outdoors Colorado. Learning Landscape Initiative.

"Development of a city-wide Safe Routes to School model in Denver and its application at Munroe Elementary School." Award Amount: \$29,341, from Colorado Department of Transportation. Brian Muller, Willem van Vliet— (PIs), and Lois Brink, Beverly Kingston and Pamela Wridt.

City of Denver Community Block Grant for a *"Learning Landscape Community Outreach Coordinator"*. Award amount: \$50,000.

"AmeriCorps Service Award": \$25,000 for graduate student tuition. Learning Landscape Initiative

City of Denver, Mayor's Office for Education and Children: \$17,000 to fund CYE support for the *"Denver Child & Youth Friendly City Initiative"* (Beverly Kingston and Pamela Wridt).

"Participatory Community Planning: creating Healthy Environments with Children and Youth." Award Amount: \$3,000, from the CU Boulder Service Learning Program. Debra Flanders Cushing and Willem van Vliet.

Continuing

"If they build it, will they come? An evaluation of the effects of the redevelopment of inner-city school grounds on the physical activity of children." Award amount: \$150,000 over two years, from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Active Living Research Program. Lois Brink and Willem van Vliet— (PIs); Beverly Kingston (project director).

"Food security and learning in the CU landscape." Award amount: \$4,578 from the University of Colorado Environmental Center. Willem van Vliet--, Ian Bates, Illène Pevéc.

"Building on common ground." Award amount: \$2,000, from CU Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, Diversity and Excellence Grant. Willem van Vliet--, Ian Bates, Fahriye Sancar.

"A community garden design-build course." Award amount: \$2,500, from CU-Boulder Service Learning Program. Willem van Vliet--, Ian Bates.

"Re-manufacturing affordable housing: A design-build studio for undergraduate students in partnership with the local community." Award amount: \$3,000, from CU-Boulder Service Learning Program. Willem van Vliet--, Michael Hughes.

"Building affordable housing in a university without walls." Award amount: \$3,345, from CU Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, Diversity and Excellence Grant. Willem van Vliet--, Michael Hughes

"Building civic engagement by building affordable housing in a university without walls." Award amount: \$5,000, from the Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement. Willem van Vliet--, Michael Hughes



APPENDIX D – CONFERENCES AND PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

2005 (July-December):

"Poverty and child and youth development." University of Phoenix, Denver, CO; October 6 (Beverly Kingston).

Fourth Annual Glocalization Conference, Glocal Youth Forum, Washington, D.C.; October 9-11; (Pamela Wridt).

Educational Psychology Graduate Seminar, University of Colorado, Boulder, School of Education; November 2; (Willem van Vliet--).

"Participatory approaches to planning and community development with young people." Third Annual Building Livable Communities in Colorado: Connecting Community Design and Active Living Conference, Golden, CO; (Pamela Wridt).

"Young people's social worlds: A case study of a border community in New York City." Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Denver, CO; (Pamela Wridt).

2006:

"The TrailerWrap project." Presentation at Ecowave 2006 Ecological Design conference. January 13-15. San Francisco Institute of Architecture. Michael Hughes and Bruce Wrightsman.

"Urban open space, public safety and the healthy development of children and youth." Presentation at Crime Prevention in the Age of Insecurity – Towards a Safer Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya; March 13-18 (Darcy Varney).

"Growing up in Denver." Environmental Design Research Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA; (Pamela Wridt).

"Using video to transcend social barriers." Environmental Design Research Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA; (Illène Pevec).

"The effects of elementary school playground renovations on the physical activity levels of children."

Diabetes Translation and Obesity Conference, Denver, CO; May 16-19 (Lois Brink and Beverly Kingston).

"Exploring alternative methods to engage Mexican American youth in health research." CDC Diabetes and Obesity Conference, Denver, CO; (Pamela Wridt).

"Children's health geographies in Denver, CO." Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Chicago, IL; (Pamela Wridt).

"Involving youth in neighborhood data collection: An introduction to the PLACES project." Planners Network Conference, University of Illinois-Chicago; June 8-12 (Darcy Varney).

"Transforming inner-city school grounds: From the top down and the bottom up." World Planner's Congress, Vancouver, Canada; June 18 (Lois Brink and Beverly Kingston).

World Urban Forum and Growing Up in Cities +10, Vancouver, Canada; June (Louise Chawla, Pamela Wridt, Darcy Varney, Illène Pevec, Ian Bates, Kelly Zuniga, Fahriye Sancar, Willem van Vliet-).

"An idea into action: Discovering the place of children in cities and slums around the world." World Urban Forum III, Vancouver, Canada; June 19 (Darcy Varney, Fahriye Sancar and Willem van Vliet—).

"Child and youth friendly cities networking event" (panel discussion). World Urban Forum III, Vancouver, Canada; June 20 (Darcy Varney).

Fifth Annual Glocalization Conference, Glocal Youth Forum, Ankara, Turkey; June 30-July 3 (Yucel Severcan).

"Developing an Ethos of Making." Presented at the Building Technology Educators Symposium at the University of Maryland in College Park, MD. August 3-5. (Bruce Wrightsman).

First Lady's Helping America's Youth Initiative. Second Regional Conference. August 4. Denver. (Pamela Wridt).



National Dialogue on Children and Nature convened by the Conservation Fund and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, West Virginia; September 7-9 (Louise Chawla, invited participant).

"Urban development in Nairobi: Looking down from the U.N., looking up from the slums." Developing Areas Research and Teaching brown bag seminar, University of Colorado at Boulder; October 4 (Darcy Varney).

"Redeveloping Mobile Home Parks." Housing Colorado NOW conference. Vail, Colorado. October 17-20. (Bruce Wrightsman).

"Parks, Recreation, and Public Health: Collaborative Frameworks for Promoting Physical Activity." The Cooper Institute, Dallas, Texas. October 26-28. (Pamela Wridt).

"Learning to love the natural world." North American Montessori Teachers Association Conference, Baltimore, MD; November 9-11 (Louise Chawla).

"Traditional urban fabric, child friendly cities and affordable housing: Examples from Turkey and the United States." Istanbul Housing Convention, Istanbul, Turkey; (Fahriye Sancar).

"Human Forum: Faces of Courage conference, Alliance for a New Humanity", San Juan, Puerto Rico; (Illène Pevéc, invited "change agent").

"Research in Geographic Education." Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education, San Marcos, TX. (Pamela Wridt).

"TrailerWrap: Civic Engagement Through Experiential Learning." Presentation to the CU Parents Association Board of Directors. University of Colorado, November 18. (Willem van Vliet—and Bruce Wrightsman).



APPENDIX E: MEDIA COVERAGE AND PUBLICITY

2005:

"Living Green: Students in CU's Environmental Design Program are exploring the benefits of urban gardening." *Colorado Daily*, August 21.

"Photo exhibit shows hurricane's effect on children: UCDHSC Center employee goes to areas hit by Katrina," by Marianne Goodland. *Silver and Gold*, November 1.

"Sharing the voice, vision of Katrina's young victims" (online), *News and Events Highlights*, CU System, November.

"Participatory Photography: Children's Voices in Municipal Planning" by Fahriye Sancar. *Participatory Learning and Action* pp 16-26, 2005.

"How Can They Look So Happy?" Reconstructing the Place of Children after Hurricane Katrina: Images and Reflections. Jennifer Kirschke and Willem van Vliet—*Children, Youth and Environments*, 15(2), pp. 378-391, 2005.

Report, September 29.

"Research and Design Center focuses on children's environments," by Pamela Wridt. *Planning Matters*, Winter 2006, 3(1), 4-5.

"Trailer Wrap: Re-fabricating manufactured housing," by Michael Hughes and Bruce Wrightsman. *Oz*, 28, 12-15 (2006).

"Child-Friendly Urbanization" by Fahriye Sancar. In: *Housing Provision to Low Income Groups and Urban Transformation in Turkey*. TOKI-Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry-Housing Development Organization pp 205-302, 2006.

2006:

Trailer Wrap project. Radio interview with Michael Hughes on "Mornings in Sonoma," KSVY 91.3, April 11.

Cities and children: World Urban Forum III. Television interview with Darcy Varney on "CBC Today," *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, June 21.

"Students tackle extreme home makeover project." *Buffalum Notes*. University of Colorado Alumni Newsletter, October 16, 2006.

"Design students retrofitting mobile home in Boulder: Project provides hands-on work in affordable housing," by Jefferson Dodge. *Silver & Gold Record*, July 6.

"Injecting life into barren schoolyards," by Christopher Hume. *Toronto Star*, July 14.

Trailer Wrap project (news item). *Inside CU: The CU-Boulder Faculty/Staff E-Newsletter*, August 8.

"Affordable mobile home gets greened: New project creates prototype, good for environment, budget," by Keely Brown. *Boulder County Business*

