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Open space vs. growth: Is balance attainable?

The rural landscape of the south metropolitan region is filling in, as evidenced by new construction just north of the GSU campus (above). The university is actively involved in open space issues and pursuing an answer to the open space - growth paradigm.

Open space can be considered in two ways. It may represent solitude and nature working together to create a peaceful and natural surrounding. It may also represent untapped resources and regions that could be used for quality home and business sites as well as easier traveling.

These two seemingly opposite views construct the problem of a currently unanswered question; is a happy medium possible?

The south metropolitan region has been given a chance to answer that question starting now and working into the future.

According to the Metropolitan Planning Council, the southern region encompassing Governors State University has been tapped as the largest area of growth in Chicagoland for the next twenty years.

This virtual last frontier of open space that remains in the south metropolitan region is one reason for expansion. Counties and communities in several suburban areas are changing from their traditional agricultural-driven roles to bustling areas of expanding industrial and commercial corridors.

Both land uses have an upside, and finding a way to balance them is at the apex of the challenge. The economic desirability of a burgeoning job rate and positive tax base help bolster communities.

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Smart growth -continued

If it is not cared for in a proper way, however, the land resources that took ages to create can dissolve under the bulldozer and excavator.

Will County has served as an impasioned awakening to the issue of open space locally after passing a referendum allowing the county to issue $70 million in bond sales for the purchase of vast open land expanses.

With an estimated 6500 acres of land to be protected with the bond sale, the total amount of open space would nearly double in Will County.

Will County now ranks fourth within the regional counties for open space: Cook County has protected 11 percent; DuPage, 10 percent; and Lake County, 6 percent.

Our region is not alone in its open land successes. Of the approximately 240 open space referenda presented across the United States in February and March of this year, 170 of them passed. With referenda being a tough sell to the taxpaying voters on any issue, it is reassuring to see support virtually across the board.

As a silver lining to the problem, the south metropolitan region has the opportunity of being near the end of the Chicagoland regional growth spurt and can try to effectively manage the issue.

Governors State, through many outreach efforts, has been taking an active role in the assessment of growth and a way to find that difficult balance between open land and growth.

Larry McClellan and Mary Tano - working under the auspices of the South Metropolitan Regional Leadership Center - assembled some of the most influential conservation and planning experts here at the university during the Open Space Congress gathering in March. The confab produced a crowd of approximately 100 residents, demonstrating an increased level of interest.

Other programs the university maintains within the realm of conservation is the Thorn Creek Ecosystem Partnership; The Calumet Ecological Park Association; and the Butterfield Creek Steering Committee.

McClellan, who is currently serving as dean of the Center for Extended Learning and Communication Services, took time to address a group of educators at the Field Museum on the open space issue.

McClellan spoke of the incredibly rapid development in the Chicagoland area in the last 100 years, especially focusing on the southland region.

Dr. Jon Mendelson, Dr. Karen D’Arcy and several other faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences have been working with the Thorn Creek Ecosystem Partnership, helping preserve and protect key sites in the region.

Mendelson, who said he is “extremely local” in his work on the environment, commented on the importance of purchasing open space to preserve the ecosystem during his recent Faculty Salon presentation in the Hall of Honors.

“I’ve been told that I look at things too regionally,” Mendelson stated.

Having a regional outlook has grown ever-important, however, as the encroachment of development closes in on the GSU campus. If a third airport were to be developed in its current plan, a portion of the runway would be located less than one mile from Dralle Road, which is traditionally referenced as GSU’s southern border framework. Growth appears to be inevitable. The foundation of the equation is growth, wide open spaces and successful enterprise.

These things are at a convergence, thrusting the issue of smart growth and management to the forefront, and GSU is looking forward to contributing to such important issues as growth and space in the future.
Female, minority enrollment at GSU meeting, exceeding rates of other state-funded universities in Illinois

Governors State University remains true to its mission of providing affordable, accessible, quality education to students traditionally underserved and underrepresented in higher education.

The female and minority student continues to thrive in the educational environment of Governors State, giving the university some of the highest retention and graduation rates of any public university in the state.

These groups have been prospering partly as a result of GSU's efforts to ensure access to a quality education, incorporating diversity in all aspects of university life, expanding the use of technology in instruction and providing service to the surrounding region.

Over the course of the last year, the rate of growth among these underrepresented groups within the university has surpassed that of other Illinois higher education institutions, and in some cases is the highest in Governors State's thirty year history.

The percentage of minority groups within the student population increased, comprising 32.4 percent of the student body in 1997. The student body now includes 1,985 members of minority groups, a 5.2 percent increase over the 1,886 minority students enrolled last year.

This is the highest number of minority students ever enrolled at GSU for the second year in a row.

Another testimony to the success of the university and its students is that minority graduation rates continue to parallel enrollment rates.

More than 30 percent of the entire graduating class of academic year 1997-98 was minority, representing an amazing retention rate, a number impossible to achieve without the hard work of students and faculty together.

GSU also continues to lead the way in female enrollment. In Fall of 1997, females represented 69.7 percent of the student body, continuing the strong enrollment figures of the last ten years.

Retention of the female student also remains incredibly high, with females representing 68.3 percent of the graduating classes on average.

GSU remains true to keeping a quality education affordable. The university has limited tuition increases to 3 percent in fiscal year 1998, a number consistent with the four-year tuition increase plan approved by the GSU Board of Trustees in Fiscal Year 1996.

The university tuition and fees remain the most affordable in the state, making the value of education at GSU a good fiscal decision. Strides made within the GSU student body are reflected by faculty and staff.

Of the 48 administrators hired at GSU since Fiscal Year 1998, nearly 40 percent were members of minority groups and 71 percent were female. Of the nine faculty hired, 11 percent were minorities and 44 percent were female.

Of the civil service employees hired, 53 percent were members of minority groups and 60 percent were female.

Overall, 56 percent of the employees on board in Fiscal Year 1998 were female and 32 percent were minority. The number of employees with disabilities also increased from one in Fiscal Year 1997 to four in Fiscal Year 1998.

GSU students hard at work.
Happenings

New faces at GSU

The GSU community welcomes the several new faces who have joined us in the month of April:

--Gwendolyn A. Harrison
Library Services coordinator
CELCS

--Janice E. Simms
Special projects manager
Provost's office

--Brian A. Richmond
Data processing analyst
Information Technology services

--William Johnson Jr.
Storekeeper
CELCS

--Mary Tano
University research associate
South Metropolitan Regional Leadership Center

--Joanne Homeman
Secretary IV
College of Education

--Albert D. Chesser
Director
Public Safety

--Peter J. Mizera
Director
Information Technology Services

--Sandra M. Robertson
Director, Family Development Center
College of Education

--Albert Shorey
Aquatics aid
Student Life

--Valerie Smith
Coordinator, Parent Activity
College of Education

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Diversity Dinners a proper place setting for communities, cultures to converge

Can people's ethnic, racial and religious differences be resolved at the dinner table?

The effort put forth by the Second Annual Diversity Dinners on April 22, 1999 served as the continuation of an interesting experiment in human relations. The dinners provide an opportunity for people of differing cultural, racial, religious and ethnic backgrounds to sit together over a meal and share their different experiences.

Hosted by the South Metropolitan Regional Leadership Center at Governor's State University, the dinners drew an estimated 400 participants in this now yearly event.

More than 40 homes throughout the region opened their doors to visitors, allowing them to exchange in a heartfelt, quality dialogue session.

Some of the Governors State University faculty also opening up their homes. Those people include Professor Mel Muchnik, and his wife, Janet, who serves as village manager in Park Forest.

Other organizations and municipalities helping host the event include: League of Women Voters of Park Forest; the communities of Matteson, Richton Park, University Park, Homewood and Flossmoor, along with the Healing Racism Project.

Another element added to this year's dinners is a follow-up allowing hosts and participants a chance to reflect on the gatherings.

The June edition of .EDU will have a full story covering the reactions.
Domestic Violence Institute event lauded for "proactive approach" to crucial issue

Governors State University Provost Tobin Barrozo addresses attendees of the Domestic Violence Institute in Sherman Music Recital Hall, above. A well-attended informational session was held in the E-Lounge, below left. At right, Barrozo, center, poses for a picture with presenters including Judge Sheila Murphy, right.

Governors State University took a proactive approach to discussing the serious and often difficult issue of domestic violence during a series of discussion panels and information sessions.

The March 30 event began with an informational component for faculty, staff, and administrators in the E-Lounge at GSU.

The session featured presentations by GSU graduate and president of South Suburban Family Shelter's Diane Bedrosian and John Maher of the Cook County State's Attorney's Domestic Violence Division.

Bedrosian and Maher both spoke of the warning signs of domestic violence and what a victim's options are if put in that unfortunate situation. Alice Parker, A.C.C.E.S.S. counselor at GSU, responsible for putting the event together, said the issue is important to the students at GSU considering who the average student is.

"Governors State is comprised of a 70% female student body," Parker said. "We want to give them a chance to talk, and not feel isolated when they come here."

Following the informational component was a presentation to the students and general public in Sherman Music Recital Hall.

Presenters included; presiding Sixth District Judge Sheila Murphy; GSU graduate and director of the Crisis Center for South Suburbia; and Pamela Paziotopoulo, supervisor of the Cook County State's Attorney’s Office Domestic Violence Division.

Paziotopoulo praised the university for taking a proactive approach.

"So many times, we're all speaking somewhere after a significant event occurred there. "I think it's wonderful that Governor's State took the issue on and addressed it before something happened," Paziotopoulo said.

Happenings

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--Kimberly K. Whalen
Coordinator, Parent Center Activity
College of Education

--Diane Giles
University research associate
Center for Performing Arts

--Craig Costa
Mail carrier, Mail Services division
BOPD

--Gail Bradshaw
Coordinator
President's office

--Susan L. Bartkus
Acting director, Child Care Center
Student Affairs Services

--Kelley J. Eakins
Secretary IV, Deans Office
College of Education

--Emmitt Jones Jr.
Duplicating Machine Operator I
Business Operations - Print Shop

--Denis Twomey
Plant Operating Engineer
Physical Plant Operations

Again, we welcome all of the new members of Governors State community, and look forward to working together in the future.

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Happenings
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African American Pride comes alive this "Juneteenth" at GSU

It’s time again for the African American Staff Caucus at Governors State University to hold its annual "Celebration of Juneteenth" and Scholarship Fundraiser, Friday, June 18, 1999 at GSU, from 6 p.m. to midnight. This is the seventh year of the nationally celebrated gathering.

The event is hosted by the African American Staff Caucus at Governors State University.

Music, refreshments, dancing, games and vendors displaying their goods are only a portion of the perennial festivities that mark the event.

African or casual attire is recommended.

General seating for the event is $15.00; additional donations toward the Scholarship fund will be graciously accepted.

For more information contact Dr. Rashidah Muhammad at (708) 534-.

African American pride is coming alive in a big way this Juneteenth: let’s all be part of it!

I-School courses offered at Governors State

If you’re a teacher, you’re probably curious about the in-

Cont’d on next page

Smart Start begins lap-sit reading programs

Governors State University’s Smart Start program, designed to create interaction and literacy with parents and their toddlers, is currently hosting a series of lap-sits Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. at the University Park Public Library.

The program will be every Tuesday until May 25.

During the lap-sits, toddlers and parents will enjoy fun activities such as a group reading of a ‘big book,’ an oversized version of popular children’s books.

Snacks and prizes are also provided to the participants free of charge.

John Adducci
April Employee of the Month

John Adducci, April’s employee of the month, is a very familiar face to those who work at Governors State University. That’s because he interacts with virtually every office on campus.

And while he’s known for his work within the mailroom, his co-workers say Adducci is one of the first to jump in and assist on any project. Whether it’s a special project in the mailroom or the print shop, he is always lending a helping hand without being asked.

Adducci has been at Governors State for a total of five years. He spent the first two years working in the library before moving to the print shop, where he started in the bookbinding department. Following bookbinding, he worked in the front office of the print shop before stepping into his role in the mailroom.

If you ask him about how it feels being employee of the month, he answers the question with the same level of consistency and modesty he approaches his work.

"I’m just glad I was selected. I like working with everyone in the university, and helping them out," Adducci said. "I like the fact that I get out and get that personal contact with all the other people who work here."
Technology assesses technology as part of Governors State's Y2K analysis

Truth regarding the potential impact of the Y2K computer equation has been elusive. Public perception runs the gamut, with some saying the equation presenting little or no problem, while others predict a deeper impact. How will the Y2K phenomena effect the local communities?

Governors State University's Media Workshop in Videoconferencing, coordinated by Professor Mel Muchnik, along with the South Metropolitan Regional Leadership Center addressed the situation, assessing and offering solutions to the Y2K equation during a widely-telecast videoconference Friday, April 23.

The videoconference "Y2k? Y Prepare? Toward Solutions for your Community" focused on awareness of the problem within the entire community, ranging from private businesses and other technology-dependant organizations to the public service sector. The broadcast, hosted here at GSU with prominent participants working in the information technology, municipal business and health fields, was made to people throughout North America via videoconference satellite feed.

Panelists for the event included the following:
- GSU professor of Criminology William Tafoya
- South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association representative Karen Fullet
- Y2K consultants CORAC Industries' President Rich MacMillin
- St. Francis Hospital Director of Information Services and Year 2000 Director Paul Fabbri
- Park Forest Village Manager Janet Muchnik
- Deputy Administrator of South Holland Rich Zimmerman
- Director of Disaster Services for the American Red Cross of Greater Chicago Richard Bynum
- Psychotherapist Rich Madison, staff member at Provena St. Joseph's Medical Center

Happenings-cont'd

creasing use of online materials available in today's classroom. Governors State University is meeting the need for knowledge by offering two new courses on how to use I-School, the most popular software for curriculum management. Educators currently teaching a K-12 grade can learn to fortify classroom instruction with online lessons and learning activities.

"Developing Web-based Instruction" is a one-credit, one week course to be offered three times this summer and "Telecommunication and Education," a three-credit-hour course, will be offered in the winter 2000 trimester. The one-week course is also being made available on-site to schools expressing interest.

Dr. Diane Alexander, dean of the College of Education at GSU, is enthusiastic about the choice of I-School software from LiveText because of the company's commitment to developing powerful Internet tools that are easy to use.

"These days, teachers are faced with incorporating collaborative learning processes, problem-based learning and technology into the classroom, and we feel that LiveText software offers a seamless-approach solution with I-School."

In addition to creating online lessons, instructors can use I-School for Internet-based testing and grading applications, discussion groups, and an integrated online calendar.
Reading Recovery program honors graduating class

The level of a child’s reading ability during the first years of school will have a significant impact on his or her future education.

Several instructors have recognized the need for effective work in reading, and have taken it upon themselves to sharpen their own teaching skills. With these considerations in mind, the Illinois Reading Recovery Consortium is happy to announce its Graduation Celebration for the 1999 Class of Reading Recovery Teachers of the Governors State University/Chicago Heights Site, May 26, 1999 at 4 p.m.

The program for this area is taught in cooperation with Governors State University, and classes are held at the Reading Recovery Consortium’s Chicago Heights location. Various school districts are committed to the program, in which teachers learn concepts and techniques for preventing reading failure in first-graders.

Meet... Gloria Alitto Majewski

Gloria Alitto-Majewski is a busy person. Serving as commissioner and chair of finance for the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District since 1984, she oversees a budget of more than $799 million.

A longtime resident of the Chicago-O'Hare area, Majewski recently relocated to Orland Park.

After moving to the south suburban area, she learned of the Foundation board from friend and board member Patrick Rea. Rea, among myriad occupations, is a trustee in the village of Tinley Park. "Pat was the one who got me interested in the university originally, and he was the one who recommended me for the board," Majewski said.

"I've been out for some meetings and have been appointed to the fund-raising committee."

That committee position is a natural for Majewski, as she has done extensive funding work for another organization, New Horizons for Developmentally Disabled Children on the northwest side of Chicago for the last 14 years.

And while the south metropolitan region has gained an influential supporter, there is another special group she will be closer to: her grandchildren. Her daughter, Joy, and grandchildren Kimberly, Shannon and Daniel live in the Palos Park area.

"I love being closer to them," Majewski added.