



American Planning Association  
**California Chapter**  
*Making Great Communities Happen*

**Sacramento Valley Section  
Young Planners Group** (April 2009)

# Guide to Young Planners Groups

# AYPCG

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## Other Acknowledgements

Jeffrey Lambert, Region VI APA Director  
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- *Report to Board of Directors (April 27, 2008)*
- *Blueprint for Change (April 25, 2009)*



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**Youth Promoters of Growth**  
Sacramento Valley Section  
AAPA CA

**Youth Promoters of Growth**  
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AAPA CA



Message from the Sacramento Valley Section

# YOUNG PLANNERS GROUP

Subcommittee Director

The American Planning Association (APA) has recognized that demographic shifts are occurring in the planning profession and there is a need to reach out to the next generation of planning professionals in order to develop the future leaders of the planning profession and APA. In the Sacramento Valley Section of the California APA Chapter (SAC APA CA) we have spent a considerable amount of time and energy working with our members to make a meaningful investment in the future of our young planners. The result of this effort is a program that is attractive to young planning professionals and beneficial to all our APA members. Our Young Planners Group (YPG) is giving our members the opportunity to: learn more about planning and related fields; build successful careers; expand social and professional networks; and ultimately become leaders in the planning profession and APA.

SAC APA CA has taken the lead on meeting the needs of young planning professionals (i.e., age 35 years or younger and students) by creating the first APA YPG in the nation. Our YPG is complementing APA's efforts to transition recent college graduates into APA as professional planners (i.e., New Professional designation). Our YPG is also building on the findings of the APA Board of Directors Young Planners Task Force, which is charged with helping APA address the growing needs of young planners, including: adapting to demographic shifts within the planning profession; determining what APA can do for young planners; and taking advantage of what young planners can do for APA.

This guidebook reviews the history of the YPG movement, with a focus on our work in SAC APA CA. The guidebook outlines major reasons why this demographic deserves special attention, how the YPG can benefit APA, and what APA as an organization can do to meet the needs of young planners. This guide also explains how to organize and start a YPG program based on our experience and the direction and recommendations for YPG from the Young Planners Taskforce.

As the first YPG in the nation, we have developed a unique and successful model to reach out to young planning professionals. Our experience has shaped YPG into a successful strategy to meet the needs of young planning professionals. Our approach also complements the recommendations of the Young Planners Taskforce report, "Blueprint for change," which presents creative ideas for YPG developed by young planners throughout the nation. As we move forward with this exciting new program, we look forward to continuing to work with other sections and chapters throughout the nation in creating their own YPG.

*Ted Holzem, Young Planners Group Director  
Sacramento Valley Section APA CA*

*Julia Lave Johnston, Section Director  
Sacramento Valley Section APA CA*



**APA Board of Directors - Committee & Task Force Report**

**BOARD MEETING DATE:** Sunday, April 27, 2008

**TO:** APA Board of Directors

**FROM:** Young Planners Group Task Force  
Sue Schwartz, FAICP, Chair

**SUBJECT:** **Young Planners Group Task Force Report:  
"Keeping APA Relevant in a Changing Environment"**

**ADOPTED POLICY:**  
Action on this report will constitute ongoing policy.

**TYPE OF REPORT:**

Action

Information

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Yes

No

**FISCAL NOTE:**  
All activities will be funded from the currently adopted budget.

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN:**  
Goal 5: Deliver products and services, and that will ensure APA's political, financial, i

**RECOMMENDATION:**  
That the Board adopt the recommendati

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE BOARD:**  
That the Board adopt the recommendati

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2007, APA President Bob Hunter appoi (YPG), in order to address the growing ne provide a forum for young planners to be recognized that great shifts are occurring to the next generation of planners as a se organization, in order to provide services



CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

**Sacramento Valley Section Begins a Young Planners Group Program**

In the spring of 2008, the Sacramento Valley Section APA California Chapter made it a priority to bring together young planning professionals to address their educational and development needs and build their participation within APA. At the same time, a Young Planners Taskforce was commissioned by APA President Bob Hunter who wanted to investigate the feasibility of a Young Planners Group program as part of the APA. The Young Planners Taskforce effort culminated with the preparation of a report to the APA Board of Directors and a session at the 2008 national conference in Las Vegas to present findings from the report. The Sacramento Valley Section began planning its Young Planners Group with an investigation and review of other professional organizations who focused on career development and materials prepared by the Young Planners Taskforce. These findings led the section to prepare a subcommittee overview, mission statement, and goals. Since then, the section has moved ahead with its Young Planners Group program, after building a contact list of over 100 interested individuals in little over a month and increasing membership of young planning professionals in APA.

In October 2008, the section sponsored the first Young Planners Group networking event. Over 50 young planning professionals and students came to socialize and network; learn, ask questions, exchange information; and voice their support and enthusiasm for the program. The event lasted over two hours, and attendees included a diverse range of planners and planning-related professionals from public agencies and private consulting firms. During the event, attendees expressed their support for a program that focused on the needs of young planning professionals, and many signed up to join APA, the Young Planners Group, and Sacramento Valley Section Young Planners Group subcommittee.

The first subcommittee meeting followed in November, sponsored by the California State Association of Counties (CSAC). Over 30 young planning professionals and students attended to hear about the goals of the Sacramento Valley Section for the Young Planners Group subcommittee and provide input on what they wanted to get out of the Young Planners Group. Key concerns and desires voiced by participants included:

- Keeping up with local, state, national, and international planning related issues, legislation, and best management practices;
- Maintaining a well-rounded base of general planning knowledge;
- Encouraging and implementing new planning trends (e.g., smart growth);
- Understanding CEQA, climate change, and SB 375;

- Earning and maintaining AICP certification;
- Earning other planning-related accreditations (e.g., LEED certification);
- Learning from and being mentored by more experienced professionals;
- Working successfully with more experienced, senior level staff; and
- Making APA membership, programs, and conferences more affordable to young professionals.

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants signed up for various subcommittee groups to begin efforts to conduct educational, mentoring, and professional development programs; obtain sponsorships; give back to the community; recruit new APA and Young Planners Group members, organize networking events, and plan programs and events for the 2009 APA California Chapter Conference in Squaw Valley.

As one of the first sections to implement a Young Planners Group subcommittee, the Sacramento Valley Section is in a unique position to develop its program from the ground up. The section is poised to shape its Young Planners Group into a program that addresses the needs of young planners, provides opportunities to learn more about planning, related fields, and regional land use issues; provide mentors to build strong careers; and expand social and professional networks. The section's Young Planners Group subcommittee looks forward to planning an exciting 2009 program and event schedule that includes: career building, continuing education, mentoring programs; social and networking events; and opportunities to give back to the community through volunteering and community service. Plans include working with the section to increase APA membership, increasing section visibility, and developing future APA leaders.

If you are interested in starting a young planners group in your section, have suggestions for what young planners need, or want to know more about what the Sacramento Valley Section Young Planners Group subcommittee is doing, please let us know. We welcome your participation and interest and hope that you will get involved. Ted Holzem and Jamie Cutlip are the chair and co-chair of the Sacramento Valley Section Young Planners Group subcommittee. Feel free to contact us at sacapaypg@gmail.com or contact our Sacramento Valley Section Director, Julia Lave Johnston at julia.johnston@opr.ca.gov.

*This article was prepared by Ted Holzem (Mintier Harnish), Jeannie Lee (Remy, Thomas, Moore, and Manely, LLP), and Juliana Prospero (Planning Partners).*





# HISTORY - development of the ypg

The following reviews the efforts of the National APA Young Planners Taskforce and the Sacramento Valley Section APA CA YPG to create a Young Planners Group movement.

## Exploration

In Spring 2008 the Sacramento Valley Section APA CA (SAC APA CA) formally made it a top priority to address the educational and professional development needs of young planning professionals and students and increase participation in APA. At the same time the Young Planners Taskforce was commissioned by APA President Bob Hunter to investigate how the APA could address the needs of young planning professionals, which culminated at the 2008 APA National Conference in Las Vegas with the preparation and presentation of a report to the APA Board of Directors and a young planners session, "The Next Generation of Planners." In Summer 2008 SAC APA CA moved ahead in organizing its YPG program, starting with an investigation and review of other professional organizations and materials prepared by the Young Planners Taskforce. Based on findings from this investigation, SAC APA CA prepared a preliminary program overview and organized a set of goals and strategies to begin a YPG. During the remainder of 2008 the Young Planners Taskforce began conducting research and evaluation to help APA offer support to young planners.

## Success

In October 2008, after building a contact list of over 100 interested individuals, SAC APA CA sponsored its first YPG event. Over 50 young planning professionals and students attended the event to socialize and network, ask questions, exchange information, and voice their support for the YPG program. Attendees included a wide range of planners and planning-related professionals from public agencies and private consulting firms. Many attendees joined APA and the SAC APA CA YPG.

The first YPG informational meeting followed in November 2008. Over 30 young planning professionals and students attended this meeting to hear about the goals of the SAC APA CA for the YPG and provide input on what they wanted to get out of the YPG activities. At the conclusion of the meeting, participants signed up to form various subcommittee *groups* and launch several programs, including: educational, mentoring, and professional development programs; giving back to the community; recruiting new APA and YPG members; organizing networking events; and planning programs and events for the 2009 APA California Chapter Conference in Squaw Valley.

## Structure

After formation of the YPG in Sacramento, the SAC APA CA Board approved an amendment to its bylaws to formally incorporate the YPG subcommittee into the section and create a newly appointed Board position for the YPG Subcommittee Director. Because the SAC APA CA does not have any APA accredited planning colleges or universities within its boundaries, the Board of Directors combined the section's existing University Liaison with the YPG subcommittee. This action provided more structure and contacts within APA for students at nearby colleges and universities that lack university- and college-based APA chapters.

## New Interest

Recently (Winter/Spring 2009) the SAC APA CA YPG has seen an upsurge in interest from colleges and universities and other APA members outside the Sacramento Valley region. Students from UC Davis and Sacramento State University have joined the YPG subcommittee in hopes of establishing connections with APA through YPG.

In Winter 2009 young planners from the Northern Section APA CA (NS APA CA) began working with SAC APA CA YPG and their section Board to create a YPG. Following the example of SAC APA CA, members began gathering contact information of young planners and, on April 2, 2009, they held a networking and social event to gauge interest in creating a YPG. Over 60 planners attended, as well as a few section Board members. The Board members were most excited about the number of young planners who are not members of the APA in attendance at the event. The NS APA CA planned a formal informational YPG meeting for early May and prepared an article on the YPG for Northern News (the NS APA CA Newsletter).

SAC APA CA has also been assisting other APA chapter, sections, and colleges (e.g., Northern Section APA CA, Los Angeles Section APA CA, New Jersey, New York, and San Jose State University) in investigations into creating new YPG programs, following the example of SAC APA CA.

## National Movement

In Spring 2009 the Young Planners Taskforce began working with the National APA Board to research and create a report known as the “Blueprint for Change.” The report presents organizational recommendations and suggested long-term next steps for the development of YPG within the existing structure of the APA. This report was presented to the APA Board of Directors in April 2009 at the National APA Conference in Minneapolis, MN. Below is a summary of the recommendations of Blueprint for Change:

1. Create a Young Planners Interest Group to address the needs and issues of young planners, and to encourage online communication, collaboration, and networking.
2. Integrate the voice of young planners at multiple organizational levels.
3. Enhance the APA webpage to provide more resources geared toward young planners.
4. Continue to provide APA marketing and outreach to students at universities to engage young planners before entering or re-entering the work force.
5. Provide ongoing and expanded training and education to meet the needs of new professionals.
6. Encourage the participation and recruitment of young planners at networking events at the chapter, section, and national levels.
7. Encourage or facilitate a variety of mentorship program activities to foster mentor relationships among its members.
8. Create opportunities for young planners’ involvement at the national, chapter, section, and division level.
9. Create education opportunities and publications that are relevant and appealing to young planners.

Since beginning the YPG, other young planners have begun hosting events, getting involved with local APA chapters and sections, and starting YPG, including:

- APA California - Sacramento Valley Section YPG
- APA California - Northern Section YPG
- APA New York Metro Chapter YPG
- APA New Jersey Chapter YPG
- Oregon Chapter New Professionals
- Alabama Chapter YPG
- North Carolina Chapter YPG
- National Capital Area - Young Innovative Professional Planning Superstars (YIPPS)

## Northern Section Young Planners Group

Please join us for an evening of social networking and a chance to learn more about the Northern Section Young Planners Group (YPG). The YPG provides young professionals and students in planning and related occupations the opportunity to interact with their peers and other professionals in the Northern Section region. The YPG seeks to cultivate young professionals through career building programs, social and professional events, and mentoring opportunities.

The YPG is open to any young planning professional 35 years and under and to planning students. If you are interested in learning more, the Northern Section YPG will host a social networking and informational happy hour on **Thursday, April 2, 2009**, in San Francisco (location TBD). If you are interested in attending or would like more information about the Northern Section YPG, please contact Kimberly Comacho and Roscoe Mata at [norapaypg@gmail.com](mailto:norapaypg@gmail.com).



# ORGANIZATION - structure of the ypg

The following section provides an overview of the organization of the YPG based on the experience and structure developed by the Sacramento Valley SAC APA CA. This information can be used to organize and develop young planners group programs in other APA chapters and sections.

## What is the Young Planners Group?

APA has not formally established guidelines for YPGs; however, the report “Blueprint for Change” shows that efforts are underway. YPGs in existence represent the work of local APA chapters and sections that are interested in meeting the needs of their young planning professionals. Because there is no formal direction from APA on creating YPGs, most are being created based on local needs and available resources. However, all YPGs have common goals.

YPGs focus on helping young professional planners establish social and professional relationships with their peers and experienced planning professionals through career-building programs, social events, and mentoring opportunities. YPGs cultivate the minds of young planning professionals through educational programs on the issues and trends that are relevant to planning the communities of tomorrow.

## What is a Young Planner?

YPGs represent a wide array of professionals, technical experts, and students from many backgrounds. Members include planning professionals from local governments (e.g., cities, counties), private consulting firms, nonprofit organizations, and other Federal, state, and local agencies. Student members primarily come from nearby universities and colleges.

## Who can be in the Young Planners Group?

YPGs are open to professionals age 35 and under and to students. Experienced planners (i.e., over age 35) are encouraged to participate as educators and mentors to YPG members. Membership in the YPG is free with a paid APA membership, including either a national APA or state and section APA member. Potential members are only required to complete a simple form that verifies their age and APA membership or student affiliation.

## Sacramento Valley Section Young Planners Group Membership

YPG members include a broad range of professionals, including:

- Local government officials
- City planners
- County planners
- Private sector planning consultants
- Transportation planners
- Environmental planners
- Economists
- Legislative analysts
- Lobbyists
- Attorneys

The following agencies, organizations, and private companies are represented by our membership:

### Cities

- Davis
- Manteca
- Sacramento
- Stockton
- Woodland

### Counties

- Sacramento
- Yolo
- Yuba

### Other Agencies

- SACOG
- Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Agency
- League of California Cities
- California State Association of Counties

### State Agencies

- California State Assembly

- Governor’s Office of Planning & Research
- Caltrans

### Private Companies

- Abbott & Kindermann LLP
- CDM
- Development Impact, Inc
- EDAW/AECOM
- EPS
- Fehr & Peers
- ICF/Jones & Stokes
- LSA Associates

- Mintier Harnish
- RBF Consulting
- Remy, Thomas, Moose, & Manley LLP
- Pacific Municipal Consulting
- Planning Partners

### Universities/Colleges

- UC Davis
- Sacramento State University

National APA

region VI

State Chapters

california chapter

Local Sections

sacramento valley section

Section  
Subcommittees

young planners group  
subcommittee

Members

subcommittee groups



## SAC APA CA YPG Structure

The YPG is organized as a subcommittee of SAC APA CA. The Sacramento Valley Section Board of Directors oversees all YPG operations and is ultimately responsible for approving programs, events, and activities carried out by the YPG subcommittee. The Board of Directors is also responsible for maintaining and supporting the YPG program.

The YPG Subcommittee is led by a Director and Co-director who are nominated and appointed by the Section Board of Directors. The Subcommittee Director and Co-director must be young planning professionals employed in a planning or related field and be age 35 or younger. The YPG Co-director is expected to be the successor to the YPG Director after the Director's term concludes, allowing an easy transition of responsibilities. Past YPG Directors are expected to be available to advise the current YPG Director and Co-director.

The Sacramento Valley Section APA CA bylaws establish the duties of the YPG/Students Subcommittee Director and Co-director as:

- To advise the Section Board of affairs concerning the YPG and student affairs;
- To preside at YPG subcommittee meetings and, with the consent of the Executive Board, establish and define responsibilities for sub-groups to carry out YPG programs and events, and appoint YPG Subcommittee members to lead YPG sub-groups;
- To develop, recommend, and maintain a calendar of YPG events, programs, and awards; to make necessary arrangements to carry out these programs and events; and to work with the section Board to develop and coordinate program meetings with the YPG subcommittee.
- To pursue and acquire sponsorships and donations for the purpose of furthering the programs and activities of the YPG and prepare and submit a YPG annual budget to the Executive Board for review and adoption;
- To recruit and increase the active participation of young planners (i.e., age 35 and under) and students in the APA;
- To improve interaction between young planners and other section members and to develop and promote a communication network between YPG members and the section;
- To coordinate with local universities and higher education institutions to promote planning education for the section membership; and
- To coordinate career counseling and education opportunities for young planners and students desiring to advance their professional development needs through: mentoring programs and activities with other young planners, students, and section members; educational opportunities; and social networking events.

## California Chapter APA Sections



# young planners group

Sacramento Valley Section APACA

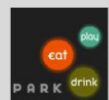
## Upcoming Programs and Events

Thank you for signing up for periodic emails from the Sacramento Valley Section APA CA Young Planners Group. This message includes links to information on our upcoming programs and events. If you are interested in finding out more about what we have planned click on the links below or log-on to the [Young Planners Group website](#).

### Sacramento Valley APA Section-wide Social Event (April 16, 2009)

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

#### Take some time out for a tax break!



The Young Planners Group will meet for a Section-wide social event on April 16, 2009 at The Park (Ultra Lounge). This event is open to all APA members in the Sacramento Valley Section APA CA and friends. Come meet with other APA members and find out what planners are doing in the Sacramento Valley region...

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2009

Time: 5:30pm - 7:00pm

Place: The Park (Ultra Lounge), 15th & L Streets

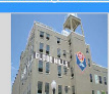
### Rebuilding Together Sacramento (April 25, 2009)

#### Give back to your community!



You are invited to participate with other Sacramento Valley Section APA CA Young Planners Group members in community service event through Rebuilding Together Sacramento...

### Globe Mills Program and Tour (April 29, 2009)



public-private partnerships and innovative reuse of the Globe Mills site in the historic Alkali Flat neighborhood adjacent to downtown Sacramento...

### YPG Reading Club (April 30, 2009)

#### Devil in the White City, Erik Larson

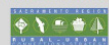


The Sacramento Valley Section APA CA Young Planners Group will be holding its first Reading Club meeting on Thursday, April 30 at...

### Rural-Urban Connections Strategy (May 6, 2009)



#### Rural sustainability in the Sacramento region



In conjunction with the next regularly scheduled Sacramento Valley Section APA CA Young Planners Group Subcommittee meeting, a special presentation will be given on the Rural-Urban Connection Strategy (RUCS)...

### YPG Subcommittee Meeting (May 6, 2009)

The next Sacramento Valley Section APA CA Young Planners Group Subcommittee meeting will be held on May 6 at...

### APA and YPG Membership

The YPG is open to professionals 35 years old and under and to students. YPG membership is included with your normal APA membership dues. Once you're a member of the APA, all you need to do is [request membership in the YPG](#). All young planners and professionals are welcome to attend any YPG event or program. However, by becoming a member of the APA and YPG you will be eligible for free or reduced program and event fees and have access to many other benefits, including:

- Exposure to planning fields and related industries
- Education on current and emerging issues
- Updates on proposed and new legislation
- Access to professional tools, services, and support
- Mentoring by experienced professionals
- Career building programs
- Social networking events
- Planning magazine and CalPlanner magazine
- Access to others in planning and related fields
- Free and reduced fees for programs and events

If you haven't joined the APA yet, log onto the APA membership webpage at [www.planning.org/join](http://www.planning.org/join) or contact the YPG. If you are already a member of the APA and would like to join the Young Planners Group, fill out the [YPG Membership form](#) and email to [sacapaypg@gmail.com](mailto:sacapaypg@gmail.com) or fax to (916) 446-7520.

Sponsored Message

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planning consultants

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Update Profile/Email Address | Instant removal with SafeUnsubscribe™ | Privacy Policy.

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YPG members receive frequent notifications (e.g., e-blasts and flyers) for upcoming programs, events, and other YPG-related news.

Becoming a member of the YPG is easy. Prospective members fill out a simple form (below) that confirms their APA membership or student status. No additional dues or fees apply.

**young planners group**  
Sacramento Valley Section APACA

**JOIN THE YPG**  
Receive services, connections, discounts and a whole lot more.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (h): \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (w): \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

APA Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
NOTE: Must be born after 1972 or be enrolled as a full-time student  
College/University: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership**  
The YPG is open to professionals 35 and under and to students. YPG membership is included with your normal APA membership dues. Once you're a member of the APA, all you have to do is fill out this membership form. By becoming a member of the APA and YPG you will be eligible for free or reduced program and event fees and have access to many other benefits.

**YLG Contacts**  
If you are interested in learning more about how you can join or support the Sacramento Valley Section Young Planner Group, please contact Jamie Cutlip at [cutlip@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:cutlip@cityofsacramento.org) and Ted Holzem at [tedholzem@gmail.com](mailto:tedholzem@gmail.com).  
If you haven't joined the APA yet, log onto the APA membership webpage at [www.planning.org/join](http://www.planning.org/join) or contact the YPG.

# young planners group

Sacramento Valley Section APACA

The Sacramento Valley Section APA Young Planners Group (YPG) in partnership with the ULI Sacramento Young Leaders Group (YLG) invites you to a program and tour of:

## The Historic Globe Mills

Forming Public-Private Partnerships to Facilitate Reuse/Infill Development

Wednesday, April 29, 2009  
5:30p.m. - 7:30p.m.

Location: The Globe Mills  
(corner of 12th and C Streets)

Cost: Free to YPG and ULI YLG Members

The Globe Mills is an adaptive reuse and redevelopment of an abandoned industrial complex that preserved the historic character of buildings and structures and provided new affordable housing for active seniors, market rate housing in a true industrial loft character, and on site commercial services oriented toward the tenants.



Registration to Open Soon  
Space is limited

This program will include an onsite presentation and panel discussion and a tour of the redeveloped mill. The presentation and panel discussion will focus on the use of public-private partnerships to overcome obstacles to the financing, adaptive reuse, design, and redevelopment of infill sites. The site tour will focus on the innovative design and unique architectural elements that were employed to convert the industrial site into a vibrant mixed-use development.

#### Presenters:

- City of Sacramento
- CFY Development
- Applied Architecture
- Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency



For more information contact [sacapaypg@gmail.com](mailto:sacapaypg@gmail.com)



[www.ulisacramento.org](http://www.ulisacramento.org)

[www.sactoapa.org](http://www.sactoapa.org)



## SAC APA CA YPG Mission

- To develop today's young planners and students into the future leaders of the planning profession and APA.
- To cultivate the minds of young planners and students on the issues and trends that are relevant to understanding the issues of today and planning the communities of tomorrow.
- To provide career building opportunities, engage young planners and students with other planning professionals, and foster social and professional relationships.

### SAC APA CA YPG Organization

The SAC APA CA YPG subcommittee is led by the YPG Director and Co-director. The YPG subcommittee is responsible for maintaining a YPG contact list and welcoming new YPG members to APA. The subcommittee is organized into several topical groups that members join to help plan and carry out YPG programs and events. As a subcommittee of the SAC APA CA, all proposed YPG activities are subject to Section Board approval.

The YPG subcommittee meets regularly to organize and carry out programs and events for the YPG membership and the larger Sacramento Valley Section. The Subcommittee divides its efforts by topical group, with each group planning and carrying out specific programs and events. In some cases these programs and events are only for YPG members, while in other cases the YPG organizes and sponsors programs and events open to all Section members. The YPG subcommittee also collaborates with other professional organizations.

Topical groups are encouraged to include at least three members to share the programming responsibilities associated with the group. YPG members are encouraged to join no more than two topical groups so they are not over-extended. Each topical group appoints a member to be the group leader who provides regular status updates to the YPG Subcommittee. Updates typically provide an overview of new programs and events, solicit feedback on proposals, and notify the Section Board of any issues or resource needs.

### SAC APA CA YPG Actions

The YPG Subcommittee maintains a one- to two-year program plan. As events and programs are planned and organized in more detail, proposals are submitted to the SAC APA CA Board for review. Subcommittee members responsible for the program or event are encouraged to attend Board meetings to present their proposal; however, the YPG Director is responsible for submitting and presenting proposals on behalf of the YPG subcommittee.

Typically, proposed programs and events are submitted to the Board at least a month in advance of an event. The proposal does not need to be complete, but it should provide a thoughtful summary of the event or program, any proposed speakers, associated costs/revenue, possible venue, and approximate date, if known. If date and venue are not solidified, these details are submitted to the YPG Director for follow-up with the Board and for scheduling purposes. For a re-occurring event (i.e., monthly social networking event), only one proposal is required.



Once an event proposal is accepted by the Board, an event announcement is drafted and submitted to the YPG Director for review and distribution to the larger membership. Programs and events are also posted on the YPG web page and distributed to YPG members in an "e-blast." The YPG members organizing the event continue their efforts to plan and carry out the program.

### Young Planners and Experienced Planners

Because the YPG focuses on meeting the needs of young professionals age 35 and under and students, tension can form among more experienced planners who may feel excluded or left out of YPG programs and events. There are many ways in which both YPG members and experienced planners can collaborate and interact in constructive ways to further their needs and professional growth. It is important for YPG members not to be exclusive or prevent experienced planners from providing input on YPG programming or participating in YPG events. At the same time more experienced planners should recognize that young planners need to take on responsibility as leaders and have time alone among their peers to build relationships. For young planners the knowledge and skills of experienced planners can provide input and mentoring insights into understanding issues and being a leader. For experienced planners the energy and innovative ideas of YPG members can be harnessed to organize and host programs and events for all chapter or section members. In both cases mutual respect and understanding are critical to ensuring the mission of the APA is advanced for all APA members.

## Sacramento Valley Section YPG 2009 Programs and Events

The following provides an overview of the SAC APA CA YPG 2009 programs and events:

### Education Programs

- Globe Mills program and tour
- CEQA and Planning
- Climate change 101
- Blueprints – implementing SB 375
- Rural planning projects/issues
- Redevelopment in California
- California Subdivision Map Act

### Professional Development Programs

- Politics of Planning
- Panel discussion on working across sectors
- AICP exam prep study group
- Reading club

### Legislation/Advocacy Programs and Events

- Mid-year legislative update

### Social/Networking Events

- Monthly YPG-only social events
- Quarterly section social events
- Planning and Urban Development League (PUDL) Bowling Team

### Community Service/Volunteering

- Organize YPG in community service events on a quarterly basis
- Participate with other organizations (ULI, AEP, AIA) in community service efforts

### International Planning

- Organize resource lists of international planning firms and projects
- Event for World Planning Day
- Article/video sharing and discussion of international planning topics

### College/University Outreach

- Building student, alumni, and professor contacts
- Shadowing Program
- YPG in the Classroom – what to expect in your first planning job

### 2009 CalAPA Conference

- Program Session – Marketing Yourself
- Program Session – 101 on Starting a YPG
- Program Session – Career Path Progression
- Event – YPG-sponsored Mixer for everyone
- Event – YPG Mentoring Mixer
- Event - Career Development Center (open to all conference attendees)
- Coordinating YPG volunteers for the conference
- Sponsoring and staffing a YPG booth



## SAC APA CA YPG Subcommittee Groups

The SAC APA CA YPG created the following topical groups that plan and carry out events, programs, and activities:

### Educational Programs

The Educational Programs group addresses the educational interests of YPG members. This group coordinates educational programs that use the knowledge and experiences of YPG members and experienced planners to expose and educate members on a range of planning topics.

### Professional Development

The Professional Development group focuses on building the careers of YPG members. Based on interests of YPG members, this group organizes programs that link experienced professionals with YPG members through mentoring and other activities.

### Legislative Update

The Legislative Update group keeps YPG members up to date on pending and new legislation related to planning. This group organizes and hosts an annual event at the State Capitol that is open to all Sacramento Valley Section members.

### Community Service and Volunteering

The Community Service and Volunteering group coordinates YPG members in volunteering events through local community service organizations. These events give YPG members opportunities to give back to their community.

### Social and Networking

The Social and Networking group plans and carries out events that help YPG members meet their peers and more experienced planning professionals in a relaxed social environment. These events foster networking and relationships between YPG members who may otherwise not meet.

### University/College Outreach

The University Outreach group acts as the SAC APA CA representative to local area campuses, departments, staff, and students. This group promotes to students the benefits of being active in APA and encourages their participation in APA and YPG programs and events.



### International Planning

The International Planning group identifies best practices in the planning field from around the globe and shares information with YPG members. This group provides to YPG members various publications and web-based resources related to international planning and hosts a local event that coincides with World Town Planning Day.

### 2009 CalAPA Conference

The 2009 CalAPA Conference group is planning programs and events that will increase participation and visibility of young planners at the annual CalAPA conference. This group acts as a link between the Sacramento Valley Section's Conference Committee and the YPG. The group's efforts include arranging professional development sessions, social and networking opportunities (both with young planners and with more experienced professionals), and conference volunteer opportunities.

### Other activities the YPG carries out on an on-going basis include:

- Sponsorships and donations;
- Membership recruitment;
- Annual feedback and needs surveys;
- Section Newsletter contributions; and
- YPG web site.



## Starting a YPG

The following 10-step approach sets out a simple strategy to start a YPG in your APA chapter or section:

### Step 1. Organize interested individuals

The first step in starting a YPG is finding other young planning professionals and students who are interested in starting an exciting new program. Discuss what you would like to do and how you would like to structure the YPG. Appoint one or two people to be the leader(s) of the new group.

### Step 2. Meet with your local Chapter or Section Board

Prior to promoting your YPG or gathering new members, meet with your local chapter or section board. It is important to make sure that your local chapter or section is aware that you would like to start a YPG and to have their support for the program. As the leaders of your local APA, your board has a wealth of knowledge and resources useful to beginning the new program. Set out a clear strategy for what you would like to do to start the YPG and how you envision it will operate. Talk to your board about what you would like to do, any assistance they can provide, and how the new group may be organized within the existing structure of the chapter or section.

### Step 3. Gather a list of contacts

The most crucial step in starting a successful YPG is compiling an initial list of contacts. Before holding any events or meetings, gather a comprehensive list of contacts who are within the targeted age (i.e., 35 and under) or students. Also, gather the contact information on the managers and directors from local public and private agencies and organizations who may be able to inform their staff of the new group. Sources for contacts include local governments and agencies and private firms.



### Step 4. Prepare outreach materials

One of the most important and useful tools in starting a YPG is advertising a brand for your group. Peaking the interest of prospective YPG members is key to getting more people out to your events and growing membership. Develop a consistent theme for flyers and website posting to advertise programs, events, and meetings. If possible, create a YPG page on your chapter or section website.

### Step 5. Hold a kick-off event

The first major action of a new YPG is to plan, advertise, and carry out a YPG kick-off event to let everyone know about the new program. This should be a social event at a local gathering place (e.g., restaurant or bar) that is well known and has the capacity to hold a large group. Advertise the event with flyers and website posting. Send out event notices using the contact list compiled as part of Step 3. Finally, carry out the event. Invite your local chapter or section board members to attend to show their support. At the event be prepared to answer questions about what the new YPG will be doing and how interested individuals can get involved. Announce a follow-up information meeting scheduled for a few weeks after the event and encourage event participants to attend to learn more about the YPG. (see Step 7)



**Step 6. Follow up with interested members**

After your initial kick-off event, follow up (e.g., email and website posting) with interested individuals and let them know how they can get involved in the group and provide information on the first YPG meeting. (see Step 7)

**Step 7. Hold an informational YPG meeting**

A few weeks after the kick-off event, hold an informational meeting to let interested individuals know the details of the YPG and how they can get involved in organizing and carrying out new programs and events. Invite your local chapter or section board members to attend to show their support, provide input, and answer questions. Advertise the meeting with flyers and website posting and send out event notices using your updated contact list.

**Step 8. Organize the YPG**

Once you have let everyone know about the YPG and held an informational meeting, it is time to organize a core group or subcommittee of interested individuals (e.g., subcommittee) to refine the goals and responsibilities of your YPG. It is important to involve your chapter or section board as you organize and structure your YPG.

**Step 9. Begin holding regular YPG meetings and carrying out programs and events**

Now that the YPG is established with goals and a core group or subcommittee of YPG members, begin holding regular meetings to address any outstanding issues and plan YPG events and programs. Keep your chapter or section board in the loop on what occurs at your meetings and any upcoming programs and events.

**Step 10. Have fun!**

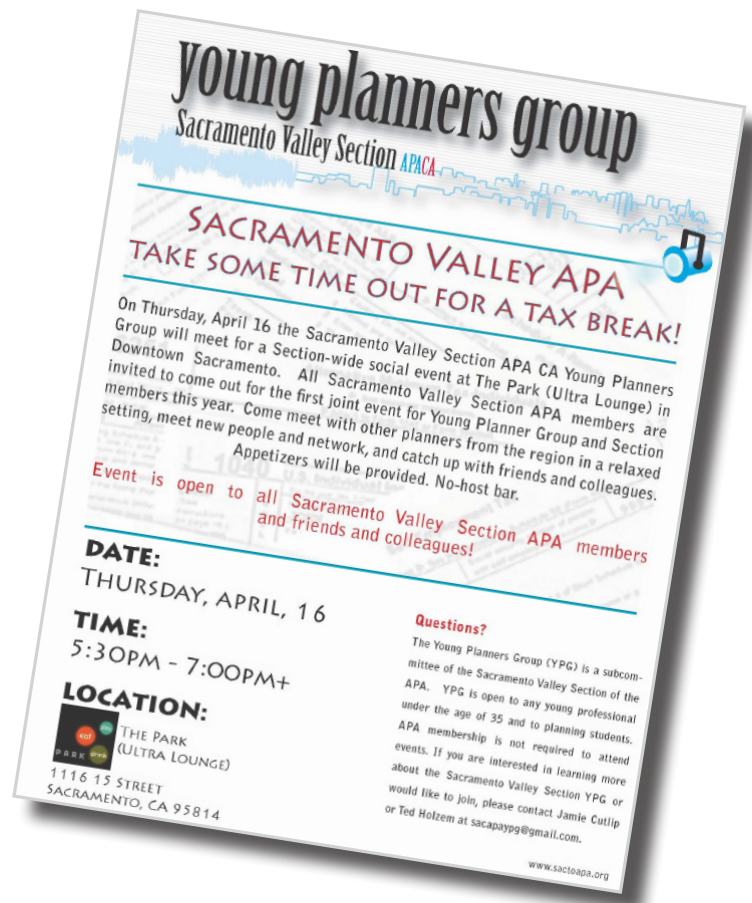
Starting a YPG is fun and exciting, but at times it can be challenging and time-consuming. Remember to have fun and enjoy the early stages of forming the group and organizing people around a common goal. Before long your YPG will take on a life of its own.

If you are interested in learning more about starting a YPG or have any questions, contact the SAC APA CA YPG Director:

**Ted Holzem**

**Young Planners Group Director  
Sacramento Valley Section  
APA CA**

**email: [sacapaypg@gmail.com](mailto:sacapaypg@gmail.com)**







# NEXT

In the summer of 2007, APA President Bob Hunter, FAICP appointed a Young Planners Group to advise the APA Board on issues of importance to young planners.

**WHO'S NEXT?** Who are the future leaders of the planning profession? You may be one of them. The next generation of planners—our generation—is preparing to take the helm. APA's Young Planners Group is offering resources to help us get ready to lead—and making sure the organization is ready for us.

**OUR CHARGE:** Identify ways to get young planners more involved in the profession both in leadership roles and among our local chapters and sections. There are many ways young planners can become more involved in their profession. We also see a greater role for networking within our generation to discuss issues important to us such as career development, moving into management positions, and balancing careers and families.

**STEP UP:** If you are interested in helping to shape the future of the planning profession, if you want to be more involved, or if you want to be a part of a support group for young professionals like you, let us know. Some of our goals for the upcoming year include organizing a mentoring program, forming local and regional groups of young planners, and finding ways to be more active in national APA programming and policy decisions.

We can't wait to hear from you.  
[getinvolved@planning.org](mailto:getinvolved@planning.org)



# young planners group

## Sacramento Valley Section **APACA**



**What are young planners looking for in a professional organization?**

The SAC APA CA YPG conducted an informal survey during the early organization and development of its program. The YPG subcommittee identified key concerns and desires to address the needs of young professionals in the Sacramento Valley region, including:

- Keeping up with local, state, national, and international planning-related issues, legislation, and best management practices;
- Maintaining a well-rounded base of general planning knowledge;
- Encouraging and implementing new planning trends (e.g., smart growth);
- Understanding the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, climate change, and 2008 California legislation regarding climate change and regional planning (i.e., SB 375));
- Earning and maintaining AICP certification;
- Earning other planning-related accreditations (e.g., LEED certification);
- Learning from and being mentored by more experienced professionals;
- Working successfully with more experienced, senior level staff; and
- Making APA membership, programs, and conferences more affordable to young professionals.

# POSSIBILITY - benefits of the ypg

The following section provides an overview of the needs of young planners and the benefits of YPG to APA members and APA.

## Young Planners Needs

Demographic changes (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity) are occurring throughout the nation that will require the APA and many of its long-time members to adapt to meet the needs of the next generation of planners. The baby boomers are just beginning their transition into retirement, taking with them a wealth of knowledge and planning experience. Consequently, the responsibility to carry on the mission of the APA and planning profession is shifting to the next generation of planners. In addition, changes in ethnicity and gender are occurring just as quickly with minority groups and women entering the profession, replacing the historic make-up of the APA (i.e., white, middle-class males). The changes that are occurring in gender and ethnicity are linked to the age of new planners entering the profession.

For many of these young professionals, the APA has not been an organization that meets their needs. The APA's Young Planners Taskforce has

acknowledged that the APA should adapt to meet the needs of the next generation of planners beyond what is provided by the New Professional designation. The New Professional designation provides only a short period of support for recent college graduates. Many have sought out and organized informal networks (e.g., Facebook group "Friends of the APA") or joined other organizations (e.g., Young Planners Network and Urban Land Institute Young Leaders Program).

APA is in a position to recognize and embrace these demographic changes and begin to meet the needs of young planners. International planning organizations (e.g., Young Planners Group - Planning Institute of Australia and Northwest Young Planners Group - Royal Town Planning Institute) have begun focusing their efforts to meet the needs of young planning professionals. APA can provide new alternatives to outreach and training of young planners to address the

demographic challenges the organization and profession will be facing in the future. APA's ability to target the next generation of planners and tailor its programs to incorporate these planners into the APA will ensure that the organization is able to draw in young planners and increase its membership.

The SAC APA CA has taken the lead in meeting the needs of young planning professionals. The SAC APA CA YPG has mobilized a diverse group of young planning professionals who are now receiving focused attention through the APA.

These young planners are putting their energy and ideas back into the organization to not only grow professionally, but help further APA's mission to its members.

*APA currently has a New Professional (NP) designation for members but this designation can only be achieved by being a recent graduate, in other words, by changing from the Student membership type to New Professional. The YPG determined that the target group for this report relates more to an age or a generation rather than when someone graduated from school or when they became a new professional. In addition, this age corresponds with other professional organizations who have groups targeting the next generation of professionals (such as ULI). The age of 35 seems to be appropriate given that many planners come to the profession after graduate school and are therefore a little older than other professions. Young Planners Group Task Force – Report to Board of Directors; April 27, 2008*

## Young Planners Group Member Benefits

The YPG program offers many direct and indirect benefits to APA members. The following provides a summary of major benefits members of a YPG receive, with examples of efforts undertaken by the SAC APA CA YPG.



### Transfer of Planning-Related Knowledge and Experience

One of the biggest benefits of the YPG program is the transfer of planning-related knowledge and experience (i.e., mentoring and transfer of knowledge) from one generation of planners to the next. As previously stated, the demographics of the planning profession are changing and young planners need more interaction with their supervisors who have a wealth of knowledge and experience. The YPG is an ideal conduit for young planners to identify what types of planning-related knowledge and skills they need and organize programs and mentoring opportunities that allow experienced planners to pass on their knowledge and practice.

### Exposure to the APA

The YPG program provides opportunities for young planning professionals to get involved in the APA and learn how the organization operates. Young planners of today will be the leaders of tomorrow's APA. Their ability to transition into positions of leadership in APA can be enhanced through the YPG, because they will experience the APA as decision-makers. The SAC APA CA structured its YPG program to mirror the Section's executive board to give Sacramento Valley region young planning professionals exposure to APA's structure and organization and provide experience in the day-to-day operations of running an APA section.

## Professional Development and Career Advancement

Navigating the professional world can be a daunting task for young professionals. The YPG offers an excellent way for young planning professionals to come together and talk about issues related to workplace politics, career advancement, balancing work with life, and techniques to overcome common mistakes. The SAC APA CA YPG has organized programs to meet the professional development needs of its members, including: organized AICP preparation programs (e.g., study groups) and panel discussions with experienced managers to learn how to navigate a career as a planner and representative of public interests; and understanding the politics of planning.

## Networking

The YPG program provides avenues for young planning professionals to socialize and network with each other and other experienced professionals they may otherwise not meet. Building these networks and contacts with other planning professionals early in one's career opens doors to opportunities that enhance the benefits of being a member of the APA. The SAC APA CA has held several social and networking events that have been extremely successful in bringing young planners and experienced planners together from throughout the Sacramento Valley region. In addition, opportunities to partner with other APA sections and professional organizations are being explored.



## Collaborating with other Professional Organizations

While there was no formal young planners professional organization prior to the formation of the SAC APA YPG, there were several organizations targeting young professionals in the development field, which provide limited exposure to planning-related topics, networking



opportunities, and professional development experience. The SAC APA CA YPG is partnering with other professional organizations, including the Sacramento ULI Young Leaders Group and Superior (i.e., Sacramento region) Association of Environmental Planners (AEP), to provide programs, networking, and community service events. Collaboration is allowing members to gain exposure to other professions, people, and perspectives and build relationships among different professions in the planning and development fields. In addition, these partnerships are allowing for a sharing of responsibilities and leveraging of resources that allow the YPG to carry out more programs and events.

### **Planning Related Education**

Educational programs provided through the YPG can target the specific needs of young planning professionals. Because of the broad range of topics that a planner must be familiar with and the unique planning laws and regulations in each state, young planners often face a steep learning curve when it comes to understanding the intricacies of local planning as well as emerging issues. The YPG provides the means to conduct education programs that specifically target the interests of young planners. Early in the development of the YPG program for the SAC APA CA, the YPG subcommittee identified several planning

topics upon which to focus its educational programming on, including: public/private partnerships; State redevelopment law, the Subdivision Map Act, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); recent California laws related to climate change (e.g., AB 32) and regional planning (i.e., Blueprints and SB 375); and rural planning.

### **Young Planners Group Benefits to the APA**

Just as the YPG offers benefits to its members, young planning professionals can enhance the operations and mission of the APA. Young planning professionals offer a wealth of untapped enthusiasm, energy, and ideas that APA can use to empower planners and further the planning profession. The following provides a summary of major benefits that YPG members can provide to the APA, with examples of efforts undertaken by the SAC APA CA YPG.

### **Understanding the Next Generation of Planners**

YPGs provide APA with a formal structure that allows the organization to survey and understand the needs of young planners. The next generation of planners have different expectations for challenges, success, job satisfaction, and career advancement. The Young Planners Group Taskforce acknowledged that young planning professionals want flexible schedules, they

## **Young Planners Group Taskforce - "Blueprint for Change" (April 25, 2009)**

### *What APA can do for Young Planners*

- *Create a Young Planners Interest Group within APA to address the needs and issues of young planners*
- *Integrate the voice of young planners at multiple organizational levels*
- *Enhance the APA Webpage to provide more resources geared toward young planners*
- *Provide continued APA marketing and outreach to students at universities to engage young planners before entering or re-entering the work force*
- *Provide ongoing training and education to meet the needs of new professionals*
- *Encourage the participation and recruitment of young planners at networking events at the local, state and national levels*
- *Mentorship opportunities including: Student to Young Planner and Young Planner to Experienced Planner*

### *What Young Planners can do for APA*

- *Expand the YPG membership*
- *Means of identifying leaders*
- *Participate in Leadership Shadow Program*
- *Bring other young planner members to APA*
- *Volunteer at the chapter level*
- *Serve in a leadership position in a Division*

multi-task, they feel hindered by bureaucracy and office politics, and aren't afraid of changing jobs. YPGs provide a mechanism for experienced planners (i.e., planning managers) to understand the desires and expectations of young planning professionals. SAC APA CA YPG has made it a priority to keep the section Board up to date concerning the needs of its members and is planning to conduct an annual member survey.

## Increased Membership and Involvement

One of the most basic advantages of YPGs to APA is expanded membership and increased involvement in the organization. YPGs are a major incentive for young planners to join and get involved in APA because they offer a place for young planning professionals to interact with their peers and directly influence and plan APA activities. The SAC APA has been able to increase its membership and involvement of young planning professionals because they now have a place in the APA to contribute their energy and secure the direct benefits of membership.



## Incorporating New Technology

Young professionals are often the first in any industry to embrace new technologies and find ways to use technology to enhance their profession. Young planning professionals are no different. YPGs bring together young planners who share a wealth of technological tools and ideas for how to use new

technology in the planning profession and APA. The SAC APA CA YPG undertook updating the section's website using a new type of website development and management interface that allows multiple users (e.g., Executive Board members) to update the site from any location. By tapping into the YPG membership, the section was able to revamp its website at no cost using a new technology that will enhance the functionality and maintenance of its website. The SAC APA CA YPG also maintains group pages on Facebook and LinkedIn where members can dialogue, network, and post planning related materials and questions.



## Student/University Outreach

Recent graduates who enter the planning profession are often not prepared as they transition out of academia for the realities of the professional world. YPG members are in a unique position to work with students at universities to provide their experience on what to expect as a new professional planner. The SAC APA CA incorporated college/university outreach to students into its YPG program, providing a link between the academic world and professional planners. The YPG has programs that focus outreach to nearby universities, including: making presentations to classes to increase involvement in the APA; providing examples of different careers and needed skill sets; describing what is expected of planning professionals; and assisting with job searches and placement.

## Mentoring Opportunities

The YPG provides a forum for experienced planners to give back to the profession and share their knowledge and experience with the next generation. Mentoring opportunities allow long-time APA members to enhance their communication and management skills, develop relationships with young planning professionals, and retain APA members.

## Conclusion

The SAC APA CA YPG has started meeting the needs of young planning professionals in the Sacramento area. At the same time this organizational effort has highlighted the need for similar efforts elsewhere in the U.S. APA chapters and sections throughout the U.S. can take an active role in meeting these needs and provide structure and resources to start more YPGs. APA can further its mission and vision to meet the needs of its members and provide opportunities to increase participation of young planning professionals in the activities of the organization. The following summarizes major issues and needs that require support of the national and state chapter APA.

## Representation at the State Chapter and National APA levels

The YPG needs to be represented on state chapter and national APA boards. Young planning professionals deserve a “seat at the table” to ensure their needs are being clearly represented to APA decision-makers. The benefits of incorporating YPGs into these structures include: maintaining an ongoing dialogue and understanding of the needs of the next generation of planners; ensuring that APA resources are being used efficiently to meet the needs of young planning professionals; and providing a consistent format for YPG programs.

*The purpose of committees at the chapter level is to carry out chapter programs and involve members in their organization at the local level. In the past, young planners have perceived barriers to entry in Chapter involvement. Also, not all existing chapter programs meet the needs of young planners. Involvement of more young planners at the chapter level can help solve these problems. APA Young Planners Groups have already organically emerged in several APA chapters. Involvement on the local level is most desirable for getting young planners involved and motivated. Young Planners Groups at the chapter level could support the national network of young planners. Young Planners Group Taskforce - Blueprint for Change (April 25, 2009)*

## Guidance and Resources

Guidance and resources for those interested in starting a YPG is needed at the state chapter and national APA levels. Beginning a new program that targets the needs of young planning professionals can be difficult to organize and plan and expend local section resources. Formal guidance on how to organize, structure, and start a YPG will go a long way in promoting this new program throughout state chapters and local sections. In addition, providing targeted resources for YPGs will ensure that local sections have the means to continue their regular operations and programming while meeting the needs of young planning professionals.

## Incentives to Increase Memberships

Incentives for young planning professionals are needed to make joining the APA and YPGs less costly and more enticing. Changing state chapter and national policy related to incentives (e.g., reduced membership, program, and conference fees) for young professionals will attract and endear more of them to APA.

## Other Issues, Needs, and Support

- National and state chapter conference programs and events specific to YPGs
- Awards for outstanding YPGs, programs, and individuals
- Web-based YPG tools and resources
- National and state chapter YPG mentoring programs



*Special thanks to Mintier Harnish for donating the materials to prepare this guidebook.*

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