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Contact Ray Ladd, Cal Poly College of Architecture and Environmental Design, (805) 756-7432. For a photo email rladd@calpoly.edu



Community Design Expert, Margarita Hill, Named Head of Cal Poly Landscape Architecture Department

Cal Poly's College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED) is pleased to announce Margarita Hill, ASLA, has been appointed as the new department head to lead the university's acclaimed landscape architecture program. Prof. Hill leaves her position of coordinator of the Landscape Architecture Program at the University of Maryland after twelve years of service to that institution.

In her new position, Prof. Hill will oversee a new strategic planning process in the Landscape Architecture Department that seeks to implement a new curriculum and identify opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborations, international programs, professional outreach, technology integration, and community-university partnerships, among other initiatives. Cal Poly's CAED has seven degree programs in five closely related departments: architectural engineering, architecture, city and regional planning, construction management, and landscape architecture. The program in the Landscape Architecture Department was recently named the best undergraduate program in the West and 8th in the nation in a survey of practitioners conducted by DesignIntelligence. In the areas of design, construction methods and materials, and computer applications, Cal Poly's landscape architecture program also ranked in the top ten nationally. The program, the only 5-year bachelor's degree of its kind in the state, awarded its first degrees in 1974.

Prof. Hill arrived at the University of Maryland in 1993, the same year Maryland Higher Education (MHEC) approved the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree. In 1998, she accepted the responsibility as coordinator of the Landscape Architecture Program, leading it to initial accreditation that same year.

Prof. Hill is an expert on participatory community design, and she has worked with communities across Maryland and in California, New Mexico, Washington, Germany, Israel, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Uruguay and Spain. As an active member of The Neighborhood Design Center, she won numerous awards and, in 1998, was inducted into their volunteer Hall of Fame. Her collaboration in interdisciplinary

settings includes participation in a million dollar grant from the Fannie Mae Foundation working on community revitalization issues within four communities of Prince George's County, MD.

In 2001, Prof. Hill received the prestigious Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture's (CELA) Award of Distinction, in recognition of exemplary community development activities. She has given more than 100 community-wide lectures or workshops on topics related to community revitalization and sustainable development. The methodology that she developed as part of the "Defensible Space" planning and design process was presented to the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention in Maryland and became a model for the "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design" Program that serviced more than 20 communities in the Washington-Baltimore region.

In collaboration with colleagues, Prof. Hill contributed to nationally and internationally recognized programs, as co-principle investigator of Landscape Architecture Image Resource (LAIR), which was supported with grants totaling more than \$300,000, as co-originator of the Sustainable Futures study abroad program in Monteverde, Costa Rica, and as founding member of VIEW (Voices Integrating East and West).

In 2005, she earned the Best Project of the Year Award from the Neighborhood Design Center for the work undertaken in her Community Design Studio course that produced a report entitled, Suitland: A Caring Community. In June, 2005, she was invited to the White House for a briefing to White House staff on community livability issues. She is currently conducting research on the Best Practices for Sustainable Development Program of the United Nations. Since joining Cal Poly in August, she has been chosen as the landscape architect to join a national group of experts organized by the AIA (American Institute of Architects) to develop a vision and framework for a more sustainable future in Northampton, Massachusetts, as part of their Sustainable Development Assessment Team Program.

Prof. Hill co-organized the upcoming issue of Landscape Journal to be published this Fall/Winter that will feature a series of articles on cross-cultural themes in landscape architecture education. She wrote the lead article that serves as introduction to the topic and outlines the theoretical framework for the special issue, plus contributed to another article in the issue. She is co-organizer of the upcoming CELA and ACSA (American Collegiate Schools of Architecture) joint Administrators Conference that will focus on the topic of leadership in the academy, in the profession and in society.

For more details about Prof. Hill and the Landscape Architecture Department, call (805) 756-1319.