

Kaye Bock Student Paper Award

The Kaye Bock Student Paper Award is named in loving memory of Kaye Bock—DCRP’s Student Affairs Officer for over 20 years—to honor her unbounded concern for and commitment to graduate students in this department. It is intended as an expression of gratitude from the Berkeley Planning Journal to Kaye for her critical support during our first two decades of publication. The winner is chosen by the editorial board of each volume of the Journal. It is given to an author who is currently enrolled as a student, and whose paper is an outstanding example of scholarship exemplifying Kaye’s commitment to underrepresented issues or peoples. The Award is accompanied by a \$250 cash gift.

This year two papers received the same number of votes from editorial board members, and so we have declared a tie. We are pleased to announce that the Kaye Bock Student Paper Award will be shared equally between Nkeiru Ezeadichie and Benedikt Brester, whose papers are both exemplary of the award criteria. Both of these papers use grounded field research to shed light on how people get along when they are excluded from formal employment or trade. They challenge us as planning professionals to recognize the role of the informal economic sector, and to take responsibility for the impacts of planning initiatives upon it.

Currently working toward her PhD at the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Nigeria, Nkeiru Ezeadichie researches urban and rural poverty, community self-help strategies, and the impacts of planning mandates in areas where development is often informal. In her paper, “Home-Based Enterprises in Urban Spaces: An Obligation for Strategic Planning,” Ezeadichie turns a critical eye on urban planning practice in her native Nigeria. Her paper combines a literature review on the informal economy with a field survey illustrating the extent of employment in this sector. She argues that planners should “incorporate the processes of the informal economy” in strategic plans. Documenting the importance of home-based enterprises in her country, an oft-overlooked means of economic sustenance by turns ignored or targeted for removal by urban planners, she calls upon planners to include home-based enterprises in land use plans.

German student Benedikt Brester travelled to Cuba for his Master’s thesis research at TU Dortmund University. He documented a unique participatory local initiative of Cuban self-help housing called “microbrigades.” Brester used interviews to illustrate a case example, the ChiChi Padron social microbrigade, which built new housing in the Nuevo Condado neighborhood of Santa Clara, Cuba. He traces the origin of the microbrigade concept and reviews the literature to place it

into context with self-help housing initiatives in other countries. Cuban microbrigades are unique, he says, by virtue of being initiated, financed and regulated completely by the Cuban government. Yet the ChiChi Padron microbrigade was considered a best practice in Cuba in part due to its autonomy from the government. He describes how a high level of social participation in Nuevo Condado where "...a plethora of small projects are accomplished by groups that organize themselves according to their interests," is correlated with lower rates of unemployment, malnutrition and crime. Brester is currently conducting research on the interlinkages of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management in the context of spatial planning for his PhD at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), Germany.