

Alumni Panel Discussion
"Landing a Job in the Current Tight Job Market"
Professor Ayse Pamuk, Moderator

Panel Participant Bios

Marcus Adams earned his BA in Urban Studies at SFSU (1999) and MCP (2002) at UC, Berkeley with an emphasis on community and economic development. Currently, he is an assistant planner at the city of Vallejo. He has held internship positions at the San Francisco Planning Department, Public Research Institute at SFSU, and at the city of Oakland's CEDA. He was born in San Francisco, and raised in the Bay Area. Marcus is a progressive planner whose views on planning were shaped by his family's experience around the redevelopment of San Francisco's Fillmore neighborhood.

Alex Amoroso, AICP is a Principal Planner with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). His work with ABAG includes multi-county and inter-regional coordination activities (including the Inter-Regional Partnerships), the Smart Growth Project, the State mandated RHNA process for the Bay Area region, and other programs to address a variety of regional planning issues. Prior to his work with ABAG, Alex has been both a planning consultant and local planner in the Bay Area working on a variety of projects. Alex is a member of the California Planners Roundtable (CPR) and the American Planning Association. Along with his regular professional responsibilities, Alex provides occasional college lectures, and participates in other local planning issues in his community.

Lehua Asher entered the Urban Studies program on an instinct, not really knowing exactly what it was but somehow knowing it was for her. She worked full time and attended City College for many years before transferring to SF State. While studying in the URBS program, she applied skills she was learning to her work as a volunteer with various organizations, such as the San Francisco Tenants Union and the Eviction Defense Collaborative. Lehua is currently working as the Section 8 Homeownership counselor at Acorn Housing in Oakland. They are working with the Oakland Housing Authority to implement the Section 8 Homeownership program. She is very excited because the program promotes long-term housing stability and building wealth in low-income families and communities, rather than subsidizing landlords. Besides housing justice, Lehua is also interested in GIS mapping, bicycling for transportation, and various crafts involving reused materials.

David Garcia earned his Urban Studies Baccalaureate from SFSU in 2004 and currently works as a paid intern for the City and County of San Francisco Bicycle Program. Before matriculating at SFSU, David attended Merritt College, where he earned his Associate of Science degree in Computer Electronics; he then worked in the high-tech industry in the Bay Area for over 10 years. From 1993 to 1995 David served as the appointed San Francisco representative to the BART Bicycle Accessibility Task Force (BBATF), which forged a better bicycle policy and expanded access through negotiations with transportation planners, police, wheelchair users, and other stakeholders. David plans to pursue graduate studies in Public Administration (MPA) or City and Regional Planning (MCRP). As time allows, David also intends to brew beer, crochet, surf, and play taiko drums.

Eduardo Cabrera was recently appointed to serve as the Interagency Coordinator for Region IX (CA, NV, AZ, HI) with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. Prior to his appointment and for the past five years, Eduardo served as the Farmworker and *Colonia* Specialist for California with the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. During his tenure in this capacity he served as part of a team that negotiated a landmark settlement of over \$21 million on behalf of farmworkers and their families in Riverside County. He provided outreach and technical assistance that resulted in about \$1.2 million in federal grant funds awarded to organizations assisting farmworker and *colonia* communities. Last year, he managed the largest HUD-hosted Statewide Practitioners Conference, which has since been followed by a number of grassroots events to organize around farmworker housing issues at the state and county level. Eduardo is a former member of the State Farmworker Housing Task Force, HUD's Implementation Managers Workgroup, the Federal Interagency Partnership, and the Federal Regional Council. He has also served as a member of the National Low-Wage Immigrant Workers Coalition and the National Job Creation Task Force. He is a current Fellow with the Council for Excellence in Government and a former Minority Leaders Fellow at the White House. He has completed the Executive Education Program at Harvard's JFK School of Government and is a graduate of San Francisco State University's Urban Studies Program (1997).

Jamie Cutlip received her undergraduate degree in Urban Studies from San Francisco State University. Her experience extends from land-use planning to environmental advocacy. She has worked previously with the Port Authority in Toledo, Ohio; as a Field Manager for Sonoma County Conservation Action and has served as an intern for Greenbelt Alliance's Compact Development Team - lending support to controversial development projects throughout the San Francisco Bay Area that incorporate *smart growth* principles. Recently, she joined Urban Solutions as an LISC AmeriCorps member supporting economic development and commercial revitalization initiatives in San Francisco's Tenderloin District.

If Jessica LOOK could rate the 3 things she is the most passionate about it would be engaged neighborhoods, decent, safe affordable housing and last but not least coffee. These passions of hers were successfully developed and nurtured by the Urban Studies Program here at SF State. During her studies, she developed and managed student based affordable housing cooperatives, interned at Mission Housing Development Corporation and studied social housing policy abroad at the University of Amsterdam. After graduating in 2003, she is now working for Oakland Community Housing, Inc in the Tenant Services Department performing numerous duties including tenant organizing and advocacy. She plans to pursue her MCP in 2004, with a focus on international planning/housing & community development.

Cody SISCO is a graduate of the Urban Studies and English departments at San Francisco State University. His academic focus was on land use planning and creative writing, mainly poetry and journalism. He has held a variety of internships with organizations such as Wiretap Magazine, Redefining Progress and the City of Emeryville's Redevelopment Agency. He currently works at Business for Social Responsibility, a non-profit that helps companies achieve success in ways that respect ethical values, people, communities and the environment.