



Issue 02 | Fall 2012

## Master of Sustainable Development Practice Program

Center for Latin American Studies

Center for African Studies

University of Florida | Gainesville, FL

### Director's Note

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As conveyed in this issue of the newsletter, the Master of Sustainable Development Practice (MDP) Program has entered into an exciting period. Students of the first cohort of the program graduated in May 2012, while the second group of students travelled to different destinations throughout the world to carry out their capstone field practicums linked to a variety of host organizations. The third group of students enrolled in the program in August 2012, reflecting once more the diversity that characterizes this interdisciplinary program.

The period since the last newsletter has also been a period of transition. Sheila Onzere, who served diligently as Program Coordinator during the first years of the program faces new professional challenges after having completed her PhD program at the University of Iowa. Cindy Tarter, for her part, has taken on the coordinator position with much enthusiasm and brings to the program considerable international experience and perspective. Sheila and Cindy worked closely together to make this transition as smooth as possible.

Since its creation, the MDP Program has been strengthened by the generous support of faculty across campus, many of whom now form part of the MDP Affiliate Faculty listed in this issue. In conjunction with the Core Faculty of the program, the Affiliate Faculty provides guidance to MDP students, enrich the classroom experience and help our students link to ongoing initiatives with known and trusted development partners.

In addition to faculty support, the Centers for African and Latin American (CLAS and CAS) Studies make invaluable contributions to the program, including scholarships and assistantships, administrative support and some funding. The UF International Center has also been generous in its support and taken together with CLAS and CAS create an institutional environment conducive to the success of the program. In addition, strong ties with the Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) Program offers MDP students the opportunity engage with a wider group of students and faculty across campus devoted to issues of sustainability and conservation. Finally, UF is committed to sustaining key staff positions of the MDP and this support is essential to the sustainability of the program.



As MDP Program Director, I have greatly enjoyed working together with faculty and students in this innovative program. The passion and commitment of our students is evident in their past involvement in international work, in the realization of their field practicums and in the community service they volunteer in Gainesville and the surrounding region. The goal of the MDP Program is to help these talented professionals develop the perspective, knowledge and skills they need to enhance their effectiveness and success in future careers in sustainable development. An important challenge of the MDP Program will be to identify attractive employment opportunities for MDP Alumni where they can put into practice their knowledge and skills.

In closing, I would like to commend our first year student, Hans Goertz for taking the initiative to develop this newsletter. Hans, a recipient of the MDP graduate assistantship from the CLAS, also coordinates the MDP Tea Time and provides invaluable support to the implementation of the program.



*2<sup>nd</sup> year MDP Student Marliz Arteaga Gómez García, leading a capacity building workshop in Bolivia during her field practicum.*

## Program News

### MDP Program welcomes incoming students

The Master of Sustainable Development Practice Program (MDP) welcomed 13 students in 2012. Students come from a variety of different backgrounds and experience, including agriculture, ecology, education, community development, law and landscape architecture. There are two students from Ecuador, one from Guatemala, one from Spain and ten students from the U.S. all with diverse international experience. Within this new cohort, the MDP Program awarded two graduate assistantships, both funded by the Center for Latin American Studies. Three other students are on assistantships with the School of Law, Department of Entomology and the Office of Student Affairs.

For biographies of members of the new 2012 students, take a look at the MDP website: [current students](#).



**Incoming Fall 2012 MDP students:** Front Row (from left): Jose Juan Orozco, Raina Zantout, Antonia Espinosa Lliteras, Jessica Jefferson. Back Row (from left): Maria Checa, Leandra Clough, Dan Stirling, Taryn Devereux, Seth Marsala-Bell, Hans Goertz, Ralston R eodica, Sebastian Pazmino, Gentry Mander



### MDP Program Director



Dr. [Glenn Galloway](#) joined the MDP Program in Fall 2011 from the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in Costa Rica where he was the Dean of the Graduate School and Director of the Education Division for eight years. Dr. Galloway holds a PhD in Silviculture from the University of Washington. He has worked for nearly ten years in South America, first with Peace Corps (Colombia) and later as a highland forestry advisor for USAID in Peru and Ecuador. From 1992 to June 2003, he worked throughout Central America with CATIE, first as coordinator to a regional Finnish financed forestry and agroforestry research and training program and then as leader to a Swiss financed lowland tropical forest management project working with poor mestizo and indigenous communities in Honduras and Nicaragua. Dr. Galloway participates in international forestry initiatives, serving as Chair to the steering committee of the IUFRO World Forests, Society and Environment (WFSE) special project and contributing to international processes on forestry education.

### New MDP Program Coordinator

[Cindy Tarter](#) began supporting MDP Program in February 2012 and accepted the position of Coordinator in June. Ms. Tarter holds an M.A. in Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management from SIT Graduate Institute in Vermont. She has worked with HEAL Africa in Goma, DR Congo, where she carried out urban research for a UF project on the social determinants of health. Cindy continued her work as a monitoring and evaluation consultant in support of a conflict mitigation project, involving the training of rural committees groups and young adults on conflict management. In 2006, Cindy worked in Western Kenya, coordinating and providing rural health services for young adults and children with disabilities. In 2004, she researched the impacts of a newly designated National Park on local populations in Mastatal, Costa Rica. Cindy Tarter has also held positions of administrative support and management in educational institutions in the US, including support to international and domestic graduate students.



### Previous MDP Program Coordinator



In summer 2012, MDP coordinator [Sheila Onzere](#) transitioned from her position as coordinator in order to focus on completion of her PhD degree in Sociology at the University of Ohio. We are excited to report she has successfully completed and defended her dissertation.

As coordinator from 2009-12, Sheila's indispensable contributions helped to establish and strengthen the program at UF and usher in the first two cohorts of MDP students. Sheila continues to participate in program events, and we thank her for all she has given to the MDP Program and wish her the greatest success in all her future steps.

## Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Development Practice

The Master of Sustainable Development Program (MDP) now offers a Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Development Practice (SDP) beginning Fall 2012. The certificate is available to non-MDP degree Master and PhD students and requires the completion of 12-15 credits. The certificate provides training in interdisciplinary knowledge and skills in sustainable development practice for researchers and practitioners. Please visit the MDP website and contact the MDP Office for more information on the certificate program.



## MDP Events in Fall 2012

**October 12<sup>th</sup>: MDP Practitioner Forum Seminar with Stephen Perz, MDP affiliate faculty:** Crossing Boundaries for Conservation and Development - Implementing a Shared Model in a Tri-National Frontier

In the seminar, Perz shared the initial results of a USAID-funded conservation project being implemented along a section of the Inter-oceanic Highway on the “MAP” frontier of the southwestern Amazon, where Bolivia, Brazil and Peru meet. The model for the project combines research with grassroots capacity building for participatory environmental planning and management. Perz serves as an associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law, and is also an advisor to MDP students Marliz Arteaga Gómez-García.



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**November 7<sup>th</sup>: TCD/MDP/CLAS Special Lecture with Florence Reed, President and Founder of Sustainable Harvest International (SHI)**



Florence Reed believes that when people work together, things change for the better. This belief led her to serve as a Peace Corps volunteer in Panama in the early nineties. In 1997, Reed founded Sustainable Harvest International (SHI), a nonprofit organization dedicated to working with rural Central American communities to implement sustainable farming practices. As president of the



organization, Reed divides her time between overseeing programs in Central America and gathering resources in the United States, bringing together farmers and donors to create a better future.

### **November 14<sup>th</sup>: MDP Practitioner Roundtable with Sally Baden, Senior Adviser at Oxfam UK for Agriculture and Women's Livelihoods**

Sally is an agricultural economist and specialist on gender issues in agricultural and economic development. Her main focus is on women and smallholder agriculture. She is currently leading the organization's learning on 'Women's Economic Leadership in Agricultural Markets' ([www.growsellthrive.org](http://www.growsellthrive.org)) and managing a research, learning and communications project on Women's Collective Action in Agricultural Markets, in collaboration with teams in Ethiopia, Mali and Tanzania ([www.womenscollectiveaction.com](http://www.womenscollectiveaction.com)).



During her seminar she spoke to the qualities a practitioner should have, and compared it to the picture of her above, “The Baobab picture I mentioned. I guess I'd call that quality - as an aid worker - 'keeping a perspective' - On the difference you can make, on the context you are working in, on 'what matters'.”

## **Upcoming Events**



### **Annual 2012 MDP Program Poster Session Tuesday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Smathers Library East Room 1A 5:30-7:00pm**

Ten MDP students carried out field practicum projects in Botswana, Namibia, Costa Rica, Bolivia, Ethiopia, Ghana, South Sudan and India. These practicum projects addressed many sustainable development objectives, including land management, community-based conservation, governance, and evaluation of sustainable livelihood groups, environmental education, leadership training, value chain analysis, resilience among others.

Students will present their practicum through posters on a one-on-one basis or in small groups. A selected panel of judges will assess each poster based on a set of criteria, and first place and runner-up will be given special recognition.

**Monday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2:00-3:00pm, Grinter 404: Dr. Mette Kjaer**, Associate Professor and Director of Studies, Political Science and Government, Aarhus University, Denmark & Danida (Danish Agency for International Development Aid), Board member and consultative research committee member

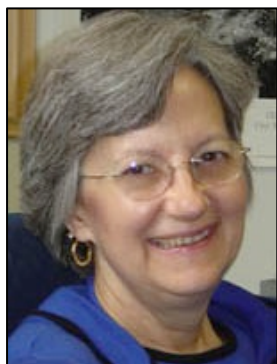


Dr. Kjaer's seminar will focus on different aid regimes and the theories behind them, a discussion of the current views on good governance and human rights approaches to aid and whether these in fact help to promote development. The dilemmas in this debate will be exemplified through the recent Danish policy shift in aid, using her experience as a member of Danida's board. In 2011, Dr. Mette Kjaer was a visiting scholar in with the Center for African Studies at UF. She has carried out extensive work and research on issues of governance and politics in Uganda.

**Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>: Dr. Stephen Snook**

Dr. Snook is a Senior Associate with Tetra Tech Associates for Rural Development (ARD), in the Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Sector. He completed his M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Florida, and has over 24 years of development experience in multiple countries in Africa, including many countries that were entering, emerging from, or undergoing periods of conflict during his assignments. His areas of technical expertise include anti-corruption, rule of law, local government and decentralization, government finance reform, civil society strengthening, election administration, and property rights and resource governance—including conflicts over land and natural resources. His current work includes managing a USAID-funded project supporting the Kimberly Process in the Central African Republic and Liberia. He will also be speaking on Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup> for the CAS Baraza.

**Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Sandra Russo, Director of Program Development, University of Florida International Center (UFIC)** *\*Biography from UF Center for Women's Studies and Gender Research*



Dr. Sandra L. Russo earned her Ph.D. in Agronomy, with a minor in Animal Science, from the University of Florida in 1981. Her M.S. in Agronomy is from the Pennsylvania State University (1976) and her B.S. in Animal Science from Purdue University (1971). She worked in Africa from 1981-1986 in Kenya and the Gambia on international development projects that targeted small farmers, including women. She continues to work in Africa, most recently in Botswana as Co-Principal Investigator on an Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship Program (IGERT) with the National Science Foundation (NSF) on [Adaptive Management](#): Water, Wetlands, and Watersheds and southern Africa. She also works with universities overseas on accreditation and capacity building issues.

At the University of Florida, Dr. Russo is the Director of Program Development and Federal Relations in the [International Center](#) and the Associate Director of the Transnational and Global Studies Center. She is also affiliated with the Interdisciplinary Ecology program in the [School of Natural Resources and the Environment](#). Through the NSF IGERT program, she team-teaches graduate seminars in Leadership, Communication, and Ethics and in Water Politics. Current research interests revolve around gender and water issues, environment, and agriculture.\*

## Field Practicum News

### MDP Students Field Practicums

2<sup>nd</sup> year MDP students traveled to Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia to take part in a wide variety of conservation, development and leadership projects. Read about their projects below:

Student(s)	Institution/NGO	Location(s)	Project
Dave Pittman	Southern Africa Regional Environmental Project (SAREP)	Botswana	Governance Dashboard Approach (group project)
		Namibia	Development of sustainable indicators for integrated water quality management in the Mayan Community (individual)
Indah Waty Bong	SAREP	Botswana	Governance Dashboard Approach (group project)  Local adaptive capacity and resilience (individual)
Ramin Gillett	SAREP	Botswana	Governance Dashboard Approach (group project)  Hunting ban and the local community of Sankoyo (individual)
Nicolas Vasconcellos	SAREP	Botswana	Governance Dashboard Approach (group project)  Livelihoods improvement and market opportunities for cattle farmers (individual)
Sydney Nilan	Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE)	Costa Rica	Community-based conservation and development assessment to identify opportunities to enhance livelihoods in indigenous communities based on their priorities and interests
Marliz Garcia	Universidad Amazonica de Pando, and Natural and Biological Science Area	Bolivia	Develop and test a process for creating a regionally appropriate environmental curriculum in the lowlands of Bolivia
Stephenie Chatfield	Water is Life International	Ethiopia	Evaluation of WASH behavior change in sustainable livelihood groups, with the aim of developing a monitoring and evaluation system for the program



<b>Angela Quashigah</b>	<b>New Life Orphanage</b>	<b>Ghana</b>	<b>Needs assessment and building project</b>
<b>Sky Georges</b>	<b>Sethu Bhaskara Matriculation Higher Secondary School (SBMHSS)</b>	<b>Chennai, India</b>	<b>Developed and provided leadership training to nearly 100 secondary school children, along with a community project in an orphanage with children infected with HIV</b>
<b>Sheldon Wardwell</b>	<b>Development partners and the Jonglei State Government</b>	<b>South Sudan</b>	<b>Semi-comprehensive needs assessment in the district in which Maar is located. Assisted the organization of a new health post and other useful tasks.</b>

Each one of these practicum opportunities was developed with the support of UF faculty and inputs from host organizations abroad. Students were also provided with a useful orientation to working and travelling abroad by the UF International Center prior to departing.

### **MDP Practicum Reflection – Stephenie Chatfield, Awassa, Ethiopia**

#### **Friday May 18th, 2012**

Just wanted to send a quick update on my first week here in Awassa! So far things are going very well. I arrived in Adis Ababa on Saturday night, and drove to Awassa on Sunday. This week I have had the opportunity to stay in the home of an Ethiopian family! They seem to have a nicer home than most, two small children, and it has been a wonderful experience. I have picked up a little bit of the language and a lot of the culture, and even learned how to make injera (the national food). This experience has helped me adjust, and given me a valuable insight.

This week has also been more productive than I anticipated (which is a pleasant surprise). I've been introduced to the country staff, and also the organization's local partners, the [org name omitted] Business Group. I've had a few meetings at the local church, which helps to facilitate the Self Help Groups. I have made contact with a woman from the church who is going to work with me as a translator and facilitating my focus groups. We met yesterday and I shared my vision with her, and this week she will be working on the translation.



*Stephenie Chatfield poses with her host family in Awassa, Ethiopia.*

I hope to use this coming week to be able to observe a few of the Self Help Groups in the community, and continue building the relationships I have started. I'm mindful of the short time I have here and I hope that I am able to get the focus groups done within the next three weeks.

**Friday, June 1st, 2012**

*Below, Stephenie meets with a focus group as part of her needs assessment.*



The past few weeks have been getting busy, and my project is moving along quite nicely. This week I was able to conduct my first two focus groups! Last week I met a few times with my translator/facilitator and we were working on training her to conduct the focus groups, and also to translate the focus group guide. She is very capable, and has been a great asset to my project!

The focus groups have gone well so far, and are already producing interesting ideas. We have transcribed and translated the discussion from the first group, and it's exciting to finally be hearing people's views and experiences! It is obvious from the first focus group that many people have gotten a very clear message from the government on sanitation and hand

washing behaviors. They know all the "right answers", and I believe one of the biggest challenges I'm facing right now is trying to get past those answers, down to what people are actually doing and practicing at home. I'm doing my best to frame myself and my work in a non threatening way, and to foster an open environment.



*Sheldon Wardwell visits a Dinka herdsman in South Sudan during his field practicum.*





*Dave Pittman conducts a community needs assessment in Botswana.*

## MDP Faculty News

### **Richard Rheingans: 2012 UF International Educator of the Year Award**

\*Profile excerpted from article by Caitlin Hartley at The Post



MDP core faculty member, Dr. Rheingans was awarded the 2012 International Educator of the Year at UF in the junior faculty category, which recognizes outstanding international endeavors by UF faculty members. Rheingans is an associate professor of environmental and global health in the College of Public Health and Health Professions and in UF's Center for African Studies, and a member of the Emerging Pathogens Institute, where he focuses his time on the economics of environmental health, specifically infectious disease. On top of teaching, he has spent his career observing how people interact with their environment and how it affects their well-being.

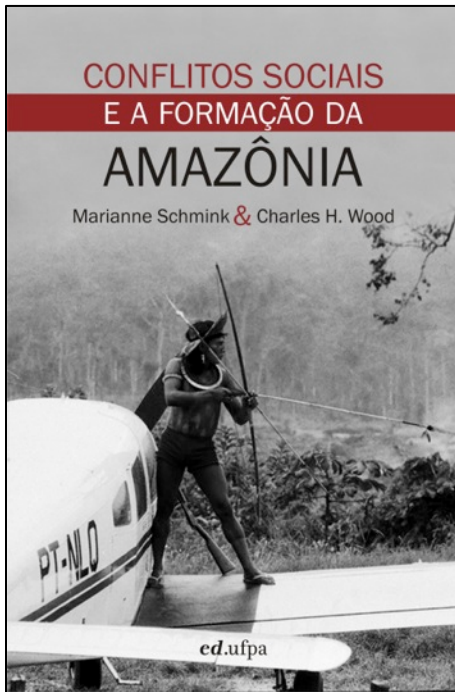
Rheingans' recent goal is to look at the countries where simply presenting the vaccines is not enough. He works on identifying strategies that are more effective in reaching the people who have stronger needs. Rheingans explains: "If you want to get the most out of your health investments, you need to be thinking about different social and economic dimensions, otherwise, you easily miss the people who need it the most."

Currently, Rheingans is looking at the impact of the vaccine for rotavirus, the most common cause of severe diarrheal disease in children. Rotavirus is responsible for about half a million deaths in children every year.\*



## **Marianne Schmink: New Publication, *Conflitos Sociais e a Formação da Amazônia***

\*Summary from Latinamericanist, Latin American Newsletter



Dr. Schmink is a Professor of Latin American Studies/Anthropology, core member of the MDP faculty and MDP graduate coordinator. Dr. Schmink recently published *Conflitos Sociais e a Formação da Amazônia* with Charles H. Wood in Belém, Brazil. This book is the Portuguese translation of *Contested Frontiers in Amazonia* (Columbia University Press, 1992), tracing the history of Amazonian development during the 1970s and 1980s with a focus on the expansion of farming, ranching, logging, and gold mining in the southern Pará region, and the impacts of these changes on the town of São Felix do Xingu. In September and October of 2012, Dr. Schmink traveled to Brazil to participate in book launchings at the Feira Panamazônica in Belém, at two community events in São Felix do Xingu (PA), at the Amazon Congress for Sustainable Development, in Palmas (TO).

In addition to this publication, Dr. Schmink has published four edited books, and dozens of articles, book chapters, and reports. Since 1990, Dr. Schmink has directed a collaborative research program in Acre, Brazil, focused on community-based resource management.

She has worked on issues related to gender and development for over twenty years. Dr. Schmink has had major grants from the Mellon Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, and Moore Foundation to support collaborative research and training programs at UF. Dr. Schmink also co-founded and served as director of the TCD Program.\*



*Professor Marianne Schmink at a book signing in Belém, Brazil.*

### Affiliate Faculty to the MDP Program

Now in its third year, the MDP Program has attracted over 30 affiliate faculty from across the campus. These faculty represent a broad spectrum of conservation and development expertise. Affiliate faculty contribute to the program in many ways which include serving as supervisory committee members, teaching elective courses that support MDP students' specializations. Many affiliate faculty members also serve on the supervisory committees of students.

The following faculty participate in the MDP program, and the MDP Program would like to take this opportunity to recognize their invaluable contribution to the program:

<i>DEPARTMENT</i>	<i>NAME</i>
Tropical Conservation and Development, Director	<b>Bette Loiselle</b>
Center for African Studies, Director Geography	<b>Abraham Goldman</b>
Sociology	<b>Christine Overdevest</b> <b>Stephen Perz</b>
Anthropology	<b>Augusto Oyuela-Caycedo</b> <b>Alyson Young</b> <b>Sharon Abramowitz</b>
Geography	<b>Eric Keys</b>
Political Science	<b>Katrina Schwartz</b> <b>Kate Baldwin</b> <b>Leonardo A. Villalón</b>
UF/IFAS International Programs, Director	<b>Walter Bowen</b>
Agronomy	<b>Rosalie Koenig</b>
Food and Resource Economics	<b>Pilar Useche</b>
Agriculture Education and Communication	<b>Marta Hartmann</b>  <b>Sebastian Galindo</b> <b>Paul Monaghan</b>

<i>DEPARTMENT</i>	<i>NAME</i>
Family, Youth & Community Sciences	<b>Muthusami Kumaran</b>  <b>Elizabeth Bolton</b>
School of Forest Resources and Conservation	<b>Robert Buschbacher</b>  <b>Martha C. Monroe</b> <b>Taylor Stein</b>
Tourism, Recreation & Sport Management	<b>Brijesh Thapa</b>
Design, Construction and Planning	<b>Christopher Silver</b>  <b>William Tilson</b>
Urban and Regional Planning	<b>Joseli Macedo</b>
Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI), Director	<b>Jamie Kraft</b>
CEI/Sociology	<b>Kristin E. Joos</b>
University of Florida International Center (UFIC), Dean	<b>David Sammons</b>
UFIC Director of Program Development	<b>Sandra Russo</b>
Law	<b>Thomas T. Ankersen</b>
Public Health	<b>Mary Peoples-Sheps</b>



## MDP Students Activities

### MDP Tea Time Launched

MDP students are bringing back the Tea Time meetings started during the first year of the program. Like the name implies, Tea Time is an opportunity to get together and share tea and coffee, but also ideas! Tea time is a student-centered initiative and space for learning about issues of interest in greater depth than the program's broad curriculum may allow. Students, faculty and alumni are all welcome to attend this bi-weekly meeting.



*MDP students and faculty members, Carmen Diana Deer and Marianne Schmink participate in a discussion on the “gender dimension of development.”*

### Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) Student Group

The TCD student group recently elected members of the executive committee for the 2012-2013 academic year. MDP students Sydney Nilan (2<sup>nd</sup> year), Hans Goertz (1<sup>st</sup> year) and Dave Pittman (2<sup>nd</sup> year) were elected to the positions of President, Secretary and Communications Officer, respectively. The TCD student group has already hosted several social and service events. On Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, the group maintained hiking trails as part of volunteer initiative at the Lake Butler park.



*MDP and TCD students show the tools of trail maintenance on a service trip to Lake Butler park.*



On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the TCD student group organized a bingo fundraiser. Students, faculty and family members competed for great prizes and shared food and drinks. Patricia Sampaio and Emilio Bruna hosted the event at their house.



*Professor Bruna announces the next number (left) as participants mark off their bingo cards (right).*

### **MDP Student Funding Awarded**

Two 2<sup>nd</sup> year MDP students are on continuing Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships, awarded by the Center for African Studies: Ramin Gillett (Swahili) and Sheldon Wardwell (Arabic). This summer Dave Pittman (Swahili) was awarded the FLAS fellowship for 2012-13. Sydney Nilan (2<sup>nd</sup> year) received a fellowship in Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) from the Center for Latin American Studies this year.

### **MDP Student Community Involvement**

- Sky George (2<sup>nd</sup> year) is currently teaching a student orientation class to assist first year UF students successfully transition into college. Sky has also worked with the Gatorship program to organize leadership and diversity retreats for students.
- On November 1<sup>st</sup>, Sheldon Wardwell and Sky Georges planned and participated in Global Perspectives, an event giving them each the opportunity to reflect and share their practicum experience.
- Dan Stirling (1<sup>st</sup> year) was elected president of the Ethno-Botanical student group. The group cultivates agricultural plots on the southwest campus and hosts visiting school groups.
- Stephenie Chatfield (2<sup>nd</sup> year) participated in a panel discussion on Environmental Sustainability at the annual Gator Global Initiative conference on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Several other MDP students attended the conference.
- Maria Fernanda Checa (1<sup>st</sup> year) assisted in organizing UF's annual Butterfly Festival on October 12 -13<sup>th</sup>
- Raina Zantout (1<sup>st</sup> year) displayed photos of her travels in Southeast Asia in the Reid Gallery on October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Sebastian Pazmino (1<sup>st</sup> year) had his community and design poster displayed from November 12<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> during a weeklong exhibit of The College of Design, Construction and Planning during International Education week

## The MDP Gainesville Community

### Flag Football



Six MDP students played on an intermural flag football team this semester. Seth Marsala-Bell (1<sup>st</sup> year) coached the team to a 1 win, 1 tie and 3 loss season. Seth also helps coach a children's Pop Warner football team in Gainesville. For many members of the MDP team, it was their first introduction to flag football. The team plans to build on the experience heading into next season.

*Members of the MDP flag football team huddle-up before the start of a game.*

### Gardening

Several MDP students have come together to start a community vegetable garden in a student's backyard. So far, the group has planted herb, legume and tuber seeds.



**Left:** Korey Force (TCD student), Sydney Nilan (2<sup>nd</sup> year MDP) and Dan Stirling (1<sup>st</sup> year MDP) prepare to plant seeds in the new garden beds. **Right:** Green rows mark the first sprouts of the season.

## Alumni News



**Daniel McQuillan** was recently hired as a Fellow with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Guatemala. The Fellowship is a 6-12 month training period for staff on the managerial career track at CRS. Dan is currently responsible for donor reporting on activities and program monitoring and evaluation. He works out of the CRS central office in Guatemala City as one of three international staff in a team of 70 people, and spends some 30% of his time in the field.

Dan has also taken a leadership role in the mission's climate change and agricultural adaptation strategy. Through this new initiative, CRS is working to certify farmers to sell carbon credits. The carbon credit scheme is part of a larger USAID-funded program that targets agricultural livelihoods, food security, child nutrition and environmental protection. This six-year program is based on CRS' Integral Human Development framework. He will spend the next six months developing a proposal with beneficiary communities and securing approval from the carbon credit-certifying agency, Plan Vivo.

After completing his initial fellowship, Dan hopes to transition to a Project Manager position in charge of one of CRS' eight areas of intervention.

**Erica Odera** is now a Research Coordinator at the Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources. The Center works with a variety of different interest groups in Florida to improve their public outreach and education programs on natural resource and agriculture issues. As a research coordinator, Erica analyzes qualitative and quantitative data, compiles reports on the Center's findings and participates in community outreach and development activities.

As an example of her work, Erica recently attended two community forums in Apalachicola to raise awareness of the collapse of the oyster industry and to develop strategies for the recovery of the industry and mitigation of future environmental disasters. She is also organizing a series of larger workshops with nonprofit and extension workers in the Florida panhandle that will assist the communities of Pensacola and Apalachicola in writing grants for current and future development projects.



In addition, Erica is involved in establishing an interactive website for the Florida Water and Climate Alliance, a group of water utility workers and scientists committed to making science relevant for practice around the issues of climate change and water resource management here in Florida. Erica says that while "this job is very Florida based, my MDP experience actually fits well, particularly with the community outreach and the information about natural resources that we cover. My main motivation for working at this job is to get hands on research skills experience for a future career in program evaluation."