

antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Recently antibiotics have been identified as pollutants in Minnesota surface waters. Information regarding the fate of antibiotics in the environment is key to risk assessment and to evaluating the need for improved water treatment processes. Working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Metropolitan Council Environmental Services, and the United States Geological Survey, **William Arnold** (Civil Engineering) will investigate antibiotic degradation rates and mechanisms in surface waters through a combination of laboratory and field experiments. These community partners are responsible for the introduction and monitoring of antibiotics in Minnesota waters and may play future roles in enforcement of regulations. This research will develop

experimental protocols for determining the environmental persistence of antibiotics and provide information valuable to determining the need and extent of potential regulations.

■ **Lifestyle Choices and Land-Use Transportation Policy.** Traffic congestion and urban sprawl are pressing issues in many metropolitan areas in the United States, including the Twin Cities. In the Twin Cities metro area, the Metropolitan Council has supported smart growth design and other planning initiatives to reduce auto reliance and decrease congestion. However, the ability of using land-use policy to affect travel is largely unknown because existing research has not adequately considered the effect of household lifestyles and preferences on

travel decisions. **Kevin J. Krizek** (Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs) will work with planners from the Met Council and Metro Transit to analyze the 2001 Twin Cities Travel Behavior Inventory dataset. Traditionally these data are used to forecast regional transportation demands. Krizek will attempt to identify different lifestyles of households (combinations of household choices of residential location, work status and location, vehicle ownership, and daily activity and travel scheduling). Careful attention to how lifestyle decisions unfold and the role that attitudinal preferences play may help future transportation planning efforts better design land-use transportation initiatives to achieve their objectives in the Twin Cities.

## Project Update: Bringing INFO-U to New Audiences

**I**NFO-U is a free, 24-hour phone and Internet information service maintained by the University of Minnesota Extension Service. The 650 prerecorded messages and online documents offer practical information to the public on a wide variety of subjects, including parenting, food safety and nutrition, money management, community living, home maintenance, pest control, gardening, and environmental issues.

In an effort to serve Minnesota's growing Latino/Latina population, INFO-U project coordinator Debby Newman partnered with the nonprofit Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER) in 1999 to bring INFO-U to Minnesota's Latino/Latina communities. As a result of the collaboration, a Spanish-language version of INFO-U was launched in 2000. Since then, more than 4,000 people have used the phone service to hear recorded messages in Spanish about migrant workers, obtaining a driver's license, food safety, taking ESL courses, and more than 10,000 visitors have accessed INFO-U's Spanish-language Web site.

The response to the Spanish-language service prompted Newman to apply for assistance from CURA's Community Assistant Program (CAP) to hire Somali and Hmong students to initiate similar efforts in their respective communities. Students have conducted focus groups, created culturally sensitive translations of INFO-U material, and promoted the service within their communities. The subject matter, phone scripts, and online

documents for each community are based on recommendations obtained from focus group participants, community-driven assessment studies supported by CURA, and Extension Service needs and asset assessments in each of the targeted communities. The Extension Service, with support from CURA, is continuing to create culturally sensitive audio scripts and online documents in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish.

The English- and Spanish-language versions of INFO-U can be found on the Web at <http://www.extension.umn.edu/info-u/>.

For phone access to the service in English, Spanish, Hmong, or Somali, call 612-624-2200 in the Twin Cities metropolitan area or 800-525-8636 in Greater Minnesota. Follow voice instructions to make your selections.

For more information about INFO-U or this project, contact Debby Newman, INFO-U coordinator, by at 612-624-3263 or at [dlneman@umn.edu](mailto:dlneman@umn.edu); or Fred Smith, coordinator of community development programs at CURA, at 612-625-0508 or at [smith009@umn.edu](mailto:smith009@umn.edu).



Photo by Steve Schneider

**Bringing INFO-U to new audiences (from left to right): Jose Ramirez, a master's student in applied economics in the College of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Sciences; Ong Xiong, a student in the College of Education and Human Development's teaching licensure program; Debby Newman, INFO-U project coordinator; and Jamal Abdulahi, an engineering major in the Institute of Technology.**