Each issue of the CURA Reporter features a few capsule descriptions of new projects under way at CURA. The projects highlighted in this issue were made possible through one of CURA’s community-based research programs, which provide graduate-student assistance for community-based applied research projects, program planning and development, program evaluation, and other short-term projects. These projects represent only a portion of those that will receive support from CURA and its partners during the coming year.

**Developing a South Minneapolis Neighborhood Index**

Founded in 1977, Hope Community is a community-development organization that stayed in Minneapolis through neighborhood devastation and disinvestment to create a healthy, stable, culturally diverse, and mixed-income neighborhood for the long-term. South Minneapolis, although not as devastated by the foreclosure crisis as other neighborhoods, continues to be a diverse, economically challenged community. No major initiatives to develop a comprehensive strategy or vision for South Minneapolis, or even to look at how the area has fared through the economic upheaval of recent years, exist. The South Minneapolis Neighborhood Index would help paint a picture of the area’s commercial, workforce, education, transportation, and other key indicators, providing insight for area groups in developing their work strategies. Renan Snowden, a Master’s of Urban and Regional Planning student at the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs, will gather data and aid in the creation of the index. The results will be used to help guide Hope Community in assessing future development and revitalization in South Minneapolis, and as a focal point to develop partnerships with area organizations.

*Program: Kris Nelson Community-Based Research Program*

**Working with Men to End Violence Against Women: A Qualitative Exploration**

Casa de Esperanza is the National Latino® Domestic Violence Resource Center, whose mission is to mobilize Latinas and Latino® communities to end domestic violence. Domestic violence has become a silent epidemic, and it is important to address the issue with holistic prevention and intervention strategies that include everyone in the community. As the movement to end violence against women has progressed, most activists have come to believe that the involvement of men as allies of women must be a key part of the solution. However, very few approaches to ending domestic violence that involve Latino men and boys in a culturally relevant way exist. Martha Hernandez-Martinez, a Master’s of Public Affairs student at the Humphrey School, will interview Latina women and Latino men. The results of the research will be used to develop a toolkit and provide a much-needed addition to the field of domestic and sexual violence in Latino® populations.

*Program: Kris Nelson Community-Based Research Program*

**Racial Equity in the Hospitality Industry**

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a coalition of organizations advocating for public policies that promote equity in urban and suburban development. HIRE Minnesota believes that hospitality jobs in Minneapolis, especially the well-paying high-end hospitality jobs, are disproportionately filled by white workers. In other job sectors, such as construction, community-based training programs exist and are successful in placing people of color in the industry. HIRE Minnesota would like to explore ways in which this paradigm can be replicated in the hospitality industry. In particular, the research will look at community-based training programs in other parts of the country to see how they train for this industry and examine their impacts in the community. Kristin Cici, a doctoral student in Evaluation Studies, will examine existing training programs for the hospitality industry. The results will be used to make the case that community-based training can have an impact in the hospitality industry and to advocate for public funding of community-based training programs.

*Program: Kris Nelson Community-Based Research Program*

**Understanding Strategies and Tactics in Commercial-Corridor Revitalization**

The Selby Avenue Action Coalition is a diverse group of neighborhood stakeholders who came together in 2010 to find ways to inspire enterprise and investment on nine underutilized blocks of Selby Avenue. The goal of this project is to help the group better understand strategies, tools, and tactics that have been used in other commercial corridors outside the Twin Cities to encourage economic investment while leveraging cultural assets. It will summarize both foundational and contemporary literature on general strategies, practices, and tools used to advance corridor revitalization. Diana Dyste, a Master’s of Architecture student in the College of Design, will perform a literature review, conduct and summarize interviews, and write a final report on effective commercial-corridor revitalization. The results will be used to directly shape and inform the activities outlined in Selby Avenue Action Coalition’s strategic plan for the corridor.

*Program: Kris Nelson Community-Based Research Program*

**Planning for the Future of Cleveland Park**

The Cleveland Neighborhood Association is a long-established nonprofit
organization seeking to improve and promote the quality of life in that North Minneapolis neighborhood. Cleveland Park is one of the main recreational and public spaces in the Cleveland neighborhood and sits between Lucy Craft Laney School and the neighborhood shopping/transit node of Penn and Lowry. Development plans for Lowry and Penn include mixed-use buildings that would include pedestrian connections to Cleveland Park. The Cleveland Neighborhood Association wants to be proactive in engaging its community residents to bring together key stakeholders to envision Cleveland Park as a true community-gathering place. Amber Hill, a Master’s of Landscape Architecture student in the College of Design, will engage with stakeholders and residents, create design concepts and priorities, and compile a final vision that will reflect the needs and desires of residents. The results will serve as tools that the Cleveland Neighborhood Association can use to engage stakeholders, such as the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, as well as potential funders for additional park development.

Program: Kris Nelson Community-Based Research Program

Work Aspirations and Career Expectations of Somali Youth and Young Adults
Confederation of the Somali Community (CSCM) is a nonprofit mutual-assistance association created in 1994 by Somali leaders to assist in meeting the self-sufficiency needs of Somali refugees. This project will collect basic work interest data from out-of-school and unemployed Somali youth. The data will be useful to document the need for training, specify the types of desired work/career, and provide an empirical base rather than anecdotal information. Ubah Hirsi, an undergraduate student in Psychology, and Kubra Dire, an undergraduate student in Family Social Science, will survey Somali youth in the Cedar-Riverside area of Minneapolis. The results will be used to develop funding proposals and to increase training and employment options for young Somali adults.

Program: Kris Nelson Community-Based Research Program

Twin Cities Environmental Justice Mapping Project
The Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy is a research and advocacy organization that supports environmental solutions that are democratic, sustainable, and socially just. The purpose of the Twin Cities Environmental Justice (EJ) Mapping Project is to document EJ issues in the Twin Cities and create a model for data collection and mapping that works proactively to support EJ community-planning and -organizing efforts. Fukhrudin Maalim, a Master’s of Science graduate student, will collect EJ data across the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The results will be used to develop EJ-oriented maps around urban agriculture and energy to be used for community organizing in EJ neighborhoods and to advocate for policy change.

Program: Kris Nelson Community-Based Research Program

GIS Modeling of Impervious Surface Coverages on Crow Wing County Shoreline Properties
The Crow Wing County Land Services Department is committed to protecting, preserving, and improving water resources in Crow Wing County. Development, stormwater runoff, surface water pollution, and groundwater pollution are all issues that need to be considered in order to protect the valuable water resources of the county. High-resolution Lidar and aerial photography through county GIS mapping will be used to determine impervious surface percentage and phosphorus content for all riparian properties on lakes in the county that are more than 500 acres in size. Robert Backes, an undergraduate student from St. Cloud State University, will georeference the shapefile to the accurate location using existing aerial imagery and add attribute information to the newly created features. The results will serve as a historical record, be used to continue to develop and improve the goals and strategies for the 2012–2013 Crow Wing County water plan update, and aid the sheriff’s office/dispatch in identifying 911 call locations.

Program: Community Assistantship Program (CAP)

Overcoming Barriers, Celebrating Successes: Municipal Sustainability Efforts in Northwest Minnesota
Minnesota GreenStep Cities is a voluntary challenge, assistance, and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability goals through implementation of 28 best practices. Each best practice can be implemented by completing one or more specific actions from a list of four to eight actions. These actions are tailored to all Minnesota cities, focus on cost savings and energy-use reduction, and encourage innovation. The program is administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Clean Energy Resource Team is one of the project partners. Luke Welle, an undergraduate student from Bemidji State University, and Tashi Wougdi Gurung, an Environmental Science undergraduate student at the University of Minnesota at Crookston, will identify challenges to implementing Minnesota GreenStep Cities and how to overcome them. These results will be used to celebrate completed sustainability best practices by cities, identify implementation barriers for additional best practices, and improve the CERTs program for cities in the Northwest region.

Program: Community Assistantship Program (CAP)